

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER XII. (CONTINUED).

THE governess stood alone at the study window. The morning was oppressively hot, and she threw up the lower sash to admit more air into the room, as Mr. Pendril came in.

They bowed to each other with a formal politeness, which betrayed on either side an uneasy sense of restraint. Mr. Pendril was one of the many men who appear superficially to the worst advantage, under the influence of strong mental agitation which it is necessary for them to control. Miss Garth, on her side, had not forgotten the ungraciously guarded terms in which the lawyer had replied to her letter; and the natural anxiety which she felt on the subject of the interview, was not relieved by any favourable opinion of the man who sought it. As they confronted each other in the silence of the summer's morning—both dressed in black; Miss Garth's hard features, gaunt and haggard with grief; the lawyer's cold, colourless face, void of all marked expression, suggestive of a business embarrassment and of nothing more—it would have been hard to find two persons less attractive externally to any ordinary sympathies than the two who had now met together, the one to tell, the other to hear, the secrets of the dead.

"I am sincerely sorry, Miss Garth, to intrude on you at such a time as this. But circumstances, as I have already explained, leave me no other choice."

"Will you take a seat, Mr. Pendril? You wished to see me in this room, I believe?"

"Only in this room, because Mr. Vanstone's papers are kept here, and I may find it necessary to refer to some of them."

After that formal interchange of question and answer, they sat down on either side of a table placed close under the window. One waited to speak, the other waited to hear. There was a momentary silence. Mr. Pendril broke it by referring to the young ladies, with the customary inquiries, and the customary expressions of sympathy. Miss Garth answered him with the same ceremony, in the same conventional tone. There was a second pause of silence. The humming of flies among the evergreen shrubs under the

window, penetrated drowsily into the room; and the tramp of a heavy-footed cart-horse, plodding along the high-road beyond the garden, was as plainly audible in the stillness as if it had been night.

The lawyer roused his flagging resolution, and spoke to the purpose when he spoke next.

"You have some reason, Miss Garth," he began, "to feel not quite satisfied with my past conduct towards you, in one particular. During Mrs. Vanstone's fatal illness, you addressed a letter to me, making certain inquiries; which, while she lived, it was impossible for me to answer. Her deplorable death releases me from the restraint which I had imposed on myself, and permits—or, more properly, obliges me to speak. You shall know what serious reasons I had for waiting day and night, in the hope of obtaining that interview which unhappily never took place; and in justice to Mr. Vanstone's memory, your own eyes shall inform you that he made his will."

He rose; unlocked a little iron safe in the corner of the room; and returned to the table with some folded sheets of paper, which he spread open under Miss Garth's eyes. When she had read the first words, "In the name of God, Amen," he turned the sheet, and pointed to the end of the next page. She saw the well-known signature: "Andrew Vanstone." She saw the customary attestations of the two witnesses; and the date of the document, reverting to a period of more than five years since. Having thus convinced her of the formality of the will, the lawyer interposed before she could question him, and addressed her in these words:

"I must not deceive you," he said. "I have my own reasons for producing this document."

"What reasons, sir?"

"You shall hear them. When you are in possession of the truth, these pages may help to preserve your respect for Mr. Vanstone's memory——"

Miss Garth started back in her chair.

"What do you mean?" she asked, with a stern straightforwardness.

He took no heed of the question; he went on, as if she had not interrupted him.

"I have a second reason," he continued, "for showing you the will. If I can prevail on you to read certain clauses in it, under my superintendence, you will make your own discovery of the

circumstances which I am here to disclose—circumstances so painful, that I hardly know how to communicate them to you with my own lips.”

Miss Garth looked him steadfastly in the face. “Circumstances, sir, which affect the dead parents, or the living children?”

“Which affect the dead and the living both,” answered the lawyer. “Circumstances, I grieve to say, which involve the future of Mr. Vanstone’s unhappy daughters.”

“Wait,” said Miss Garth; “wait a little.” She pushed her grey hair back from her temples, and struggled with the sickness of heart, the dreadful faintness of terror, which would have overpowered a younger, or a less resolute woman. Her eyes dim with watching, weary with grief, searched the lawyer’s unfathomable face. “His unhappy daughters?” she repeated to herself, vacantly. “He talks as if there was some worse calamity than the calamity which has made them orphans.” She paused once more; and rallied her sinking courage. “I will not make your hard duty, sir, more painful to you than I can help,” she resumed. “Show me the place in the will. Let me read it, and know the worst.”

Mr. Pendril turned back to the first page, and pointed to a certain place in the cramped lines of writing. “Begin here,” he said.

She tried to begin; she tried to follow his finger, as she had followed it already to the signatures and the dates. But her senses seemed to share the confusion of her mind—the words mingled together, and the lines swam before her eyes.

“I can’t follow you,” she said. “You must tell it, or read it to me.” She pushed her chair back from the table, and tried to collect herself. “Stop!” she exclaimed, as the lawyer, with visible hesitation and reluctance, took the papers in his own hand, “One question, first. Does his will provide for his children?”

“His will provided for them, when he made it.”

“When he made it?” (Something of her natural bluntness broke out in her manner as she repeated the answer.) “Does it provide for them now?”

“It does not?”

She snatched the will from his hand, and threw it into a corner of the room. “You mean well,” she said; “you wish to spare me—but you are wasting your time, and my strength. If the will is useless, there let it lie. Tell me the truth, Mr. Pendril—tell it plainly, tell it instantly, in your own words!”

He felt that it would be useless cruelty to resist that appeal. There was no merciful alternative but to answer it on the spot.

“I must refer you to the spring of the present year, Miss Garth. Do you remember the fourth of March?”

Her attention wandered again; a thought seemed to have struck her at the moment when he spoke. Instead of answering his inquiry, she put a question of her own.

“Let me break the news to myself, she said—

“let me anticipate you, if I can. His useless will, the terms in which you speak of his daughters, the doubt you seem to feel of my continued respect for his memory, have opened a new view to me. Mr. Vanstone has died a ruined man—is that what you had to tell me?”

“Far from it. Mr. Vanstone has died, leaving a fortune of more than eighty thousand pounds—a fortune invested in excellent securities. He lived up to his income, but never beyond it; and all his debts added together would not reach two hundred pounds. If he had died a ruined man, I should have felt deeply for his children—but I should not have hesitated to tell you the truth, as I am hesitating now. Let me repeat a question which escaped you, I think, when I first put it. Carry your mind back to the spring of this year. Do you remember the fourth of March?”

Miss Garth shook her head. “My memory for dates is bad at the best of times,” she said. “I am too confused to exert it at a moment’s notice. Can you put your question in no other form?”

He put it in this form:—

“Do you remember any domestic event in the spring of the present year, which appeared to affect Mr. Vanstone more seriously than usual?”

Miss Garth leaned forward in her chair, and looked eagerly at Mr. Pendril across the table. “The journey to London!” she exclaimed. “I distrusted the journey to London from the first! Yes! I remember Mr. Vanstone receiving a letter—I remember his reading it, and looking so altered from himself that he startled us all.”

“Did you notice any apparent understanding between Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone, on the subject of that letter?”

“Yes: I did. One of the girls—it was Magdalen—mentioned the post-mark; some place in America. It all comes back to me, Mr. Pendril. Mrs. Vanstone looked excited and anxious, the moment she heard the place named. They went to London together, the next day; they explained nothing to their daughters, nothing to me. Mrs. Vanstone said the journey was for family affairs. I suspected something wrong; I couldn’t tell what. Mrs. Vanstone wrote to me from London, saying that her object was to consult a physician on the state of her health, and not to alarm her daughters by telling them. Something in the letter rather hurt me at the time. I thought there might be some other motive that she was keeping from me. Did I do her wrong?”

“You did her no wrong. There *was* a motive which she was keeping from you. In revealing that motive, I reveal the painful secret which brings me to this house. All that I could do to prepare you, I have done. Let me now tell the truth in the plainest and fewest words. When Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone left Combe-Raven, in the March of the present year—”

Before he could complete the sentence, a sudden movement of Miss Garth’s interrupted him.

She started violently, and looked round towards the window. "Only the wind among the leaves," she said faintly. "My nerves are so shaken, the least thing startles me. Speak out, for God's sake! When Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone left this house, tell me in plain words—why did they go to London?"

In plain words Mr. Pendril told her:

"They went to London to be married."

With that answer he placed a slip of paper on the table. It was the marriage certificate of the dead parents, and the date it bore was March the twentieth, eighteen hundred and forty-six."

Miss Garth neither moved nor spoke. The certificate lay beneath her unnoticed. She sat with her eyes rooted on the lawyer's face; her mind stunned, her senses helpless. He saw that all his efforts to break the shock of the discovery had been efforts made in vain; he felt the vital importance of rousing her, and firmly and distinctly repeated the fatal words.

"They went to London to be married," he said.

"Try to rouse yourself: try to realise the plain fact first: the explanation shall come afterwards. Miss Garth, I speak the miserable truth! In the spring of this year they left home; they lived in London for a fortnight, in the strictest retirement; they were married by license at the end of that time. There is a copy of the certificate, which I myself obtained on Monday last. Read the date of the marriage for yourself. It is Friday, the twentieth of March—the March of this present year."

As he pointed to the certificate, that faint breath of air among the shrubs beneath the window, which had startled Miss Garth, stirred the leaves once more. He heard it himself, this time; and turned his face, so as to let the breeze play upon it. No breeze came; no breath of air that was strong enough for him to feel, floated into the room.

Miss Garth roused herself mechanically, and read the certificate. It seemed to produce no distinct impression on her: she laid it on one side, in a lost bewildered manner. "Twelve years," she said, in low hopeless tones—"twelve quiet happy years I lived with this family. Mrs. Vanstone was my friend; my dear, valued friend—my sister, I might almost say. I can't believe it. Bear with me a little, sir; I can't believe it yet."

"I shall help you to believe it, when I tell you more," said Mr. Pendril—"you will understand me better when I take you back to the time of Mr. Vanstone's early life. I won't ask for your attention just yet. Let us wait a little, until you recover yourself."

They waited a few minutes. The lawyer took some letters from his pocket, referred to them attentively, and put them back again. "Can you listen to me, now?" he asked kindly. She bowed her head in answer. Mr. Pendril considered with himself for a moment. "I must caution you on one point," he said. "If the aspect of Mr. Vanstone's character which I am now

about to present to you, seems in some respects, at variance with your later experience, bear in mind that when you first knew him twelve years since, he was a man of forty; and that, when I first knew him, he was a lad of nineteen."

His next words raised the veil, and showed the irrevocable Past.

CHAPTER XIII.

"THE fortune which Mr. Vanstone possessed when you knew him" (the lawyer began) "was part, and part only, of the inheritance which fell to him on his father's death. Mr. Vanstone the elder, was a manufacturer in the North of England. He married early in life; and the children of the marriage were either six, or seven in number—I am not certain which. First, Michael, the eldest son, still living, and now an old man, turned seventy. Secondly, Selina, the eldest daughter, who married in after-life, and who died ten or eleven years ago. After those two, came other sons and daughters whose early deaths make it unnecessary to mention them particularly. The last and by many years the youngest of the children was Andrew, whom I first knew, as I told you, at the age of nineteen. My father was then on the point of retiring from the active pursuit of his profession; and, in succeeding to his business, I also succeeded to his connexion with the Vanstones, as the family solicitor.

"At that time, Andrew had just started in life by entering the army. After little more than a year of home-service, he was ordered out with his regiment to Canada. When he quitted England, he left his father and his elder brother Michael seriously at variance. I need not detain you by entering into the cause of the quarrel. I need only tell you that the elder Mr. Vanstone, with many excellent qualities, was a man of fierce and intractable temper. His eldest son had set him at defiance, under circumstances which might have justly irritated a father of far milder character; and he declared, in the most positive terms, that he would never see Michael's face again. In defiance of my entreaties, and of the entreaties of his wife, he tore up, in our presence, the will which provided for Michael's share in the paternal inheritance. Such was the family position, when the younger son left home for Canada.

"Some months after Andrew's arrival with his regiment at Quebec, he became acquainted with a woman of great personal attractions, who came, or said she came, from one of the southern states of America. She obtained an immediate influence over him: and she used it to the basest purpose. You knew the easy, affectionate, trusting nature of the man, in later life—you can imagine how thoughtlessly he acted on the impulses of his youth. It is useless to dwell on this lamentable part of the story. He was just twenty-one: he was blindly devoted to a worthless woman; and she led him on, with merciless cunning, till it was too late to draw back. In one word, he committed the fatal error of his life: he married her.

"She had been wise enough in her own interests to dread the influence of his brother-officers, and to persuade him, up to the period of the marriage ceremony, to keep the proposed union between them a secret. She could do this; but she could not provide against the results of accident. Hardly three months had passed, when a chance disclosure exposed the life she had led, before her marriage. But one alternative was left to her husband—the alternative of instantly separating from her.

"The effect of the discovery on the unhappy boy—for a boy in disposition he still was—may be judged by the event which followed the exposure. One of Andrew's superior officers found him in his quarters, writing to his father a confession of the disgraceful truth, with a loaded pistol by his side. That officer saved the lad's life from his own hand; and hushed up the scandalous affair, by a compromise. The marriage being a perfectly legal one, and the wife's misconduct prior to the ceremony, giving her husband no claim to his release from her by divorce, it was only possible to appeal to her sense of her own interests. A handsome annual allowance was secured to her, on condition that she returned to the place from which she had come; that she never appeared in England; and that she ceased to use her husband's name. Other stipulations were added to these. She accepted them all; and measures were privately taken to have her well looked after in the place of her retreat. What life she led there, and whether she performed all the conditions imposed on her, I cannot say. I can only tell you that she never, to my knowledge, came to England; that she never annoyed Mr. Vanstone; and that the annual allowance was paid her, through a local agent in America, to the day of her death. All that she wanted in marrying him was money; and money she got.

"In the mean time, Andrew had left the regiment. Nothing would induce him to face his brother-officers after what had happened. He sold out, and returned to England. The first intelligence which reached him on his return, was the intelligence of his father's death. He came to my office in London, before going home, and there learnt from my lips how the family quarrel had ended.

"The will which Mr. Vanstone the elder had destroyed in my presence, had not been, so far as I knew, replaced by another. When I was sent for, in the usual course, on his death, I fully expected that the law would be left to make the customary division among his widow and his children. To my surprise, a will appeared among his papers, correctly drawn and executed, and dated about a week after the period when the first will had been destroyed. He had maintained his vindictive purpose against his eldest son; and had applied to a stranger for the professional assistance which I honestly believe he was ashamed to ask for at my hands.

"It is needless to trouble you with the provi-

sions of the will in detail. There were the widow, and three surviving children to be provided for. The widow received a life-interest only, in a portion of the testator's property. The remaining portion was divided between Andrew and Selina—two-thirds to the brother; one-third to the sister. On the mother's death, the money from which her income had been derived, was to go to Andrew and Selina, in the same relative proportions as before—five thousand pounds having been first deducted from the sum, and paid to Michael, as the sole legacy left by the implacable father to his eldest son.

"Speaking in round numbers, the division of property, as settled by the will, stood thus. Before the mother's death, Andrew had seventy thousand pounds; Selina had thirty-five thousand pounds; Michael had—nothing. After the mother's death, Michael had five thousand pounds, to set against Andrew's inheritance augmented to one hundred thousand, and Selina's inheritance increased to fifty thousand.—Do not suppose that I am dwelling unnecessarily on this part of the subject. Every word I now speak bears on interests still in suspense, which vitally concern Mr. Vanstone's daughters. As we get on from past to present, keep in mind the terrible inequality of Michael's inheritance and Andrew's inheritance. The harm done by that vindictive will is, I greatly fear, not over yet.

"Andrew's first impulse, when he heard the news which I had to tell him, was worthy of the open, generous nature of the man. He at once proposed to divide his inheritance with his elder brother. But there was one serious obstacle in the way. A letter from Michael was waiting for him at my office when he came there; and that letter charged him with being the original cause of estrangement between his father and his elder brother. The efforts which he had made—bluntly and incautiously, I own; but with the purest and kindest intentions, as I know—to compose the quarrel before leaving home, were perverted by the vilest misconstruction, to support an accusation of treachery and falsehood which would have stung any man to the quick. Andrew felt, what I felt, that if these imputations were not withdrawn, before his generous intentions towards his brother took effect, the mere fact of their execution would amount to a practical acknowledgment of the justice of Michael's charge against him. He wrote to his brother, in the most forbearing terms. The answer received was as offensive as words could make it. Michael had inherited his father's temper, unredeemed by his father's better qualities: his second letter reiterated the charges contained in the first, and declared that he would only accept the offered division as an act of atonement and restitution on Andrew's part. I next wrote to the mother, to use her influence. She was herself aggrieved at being left with nothing more than a life-interest in her husband's property; she sided resolutely with Michael; and she stigmatised

Andrew's proposal as an attempt to bribe her eldest son into withdrawing a charge against his brother, which that brother knew to be true. After this last repulse, nothing more could be done. Michael withdrew to the Continent; and his mother followed him there. She lived long enough, and saved money enough out of her income, to add considerably, at her death, to her elder son's five thousand pounds. He had previously still further improved his pecuniary position by an advantageous marriage; and he is now passing the close of his days either in France or Switzerland—a widower, with one son. We shall return to him shortly. In the mean time, I need only tell you that Andrew and Michael never again met—never again communicated, even by writing. To all intents and purposes, they were dead to each other, from those early days to the present time.

"You can now estimate what Andrew's position was when he left his profession and returned to England. Possessed of a fortune, he was alone in the world;—his future destroyed at the fair outset of life; his mother and brother estranged from him; his sister lately married, with interests and hopes in which he had no share. Men of firmer mental calibre might have found refuge from such a situation as this, in an absorbing intellectual pursuit. He was not capable of the effort; all the strength of his character lay in the affections he had wasted. His place in the world was that quiet place at home, with wife and children to make his life happy, which he had lost for ever. To look back, was more than he dare. To look forward, was more than he could. In sheer despair, he let his own impetuous youth drive him on; and cast himself into the lowest dissipations of a London life.

"A woman's falsehood had driven him to his ruin. A woman's love saved him, at the outset of his downward career. Let us not speak of her harshly—for we laid her with him yesterday in the grave.

"You, who only knew Mrs. Vanstone in later life, when illness and sorrow and secret care had altered and saddened her, can form no adequate idea of her attractions of person and character when she was a girl of seventeen. I was with Andrew when he first met her. I had tried to rescue him, for one night at least, from degrading associates and degrading pleasures, by persuading him to go with me to a ball given by one of the great City Companies. There, they met. She produced a strong impression on him, the moment he saw her. To me, as to him, she was a total stranger. An introduction to her, obtained in the customary manner, informed him that she was the daughter of one Mr. Blake. The rest he discovered from herself. They were partners in the dance (unobserved in that crowded ball-room) all through the evening.

"Circumstances were against her from the first. She was unhappy at home. Her family and friends occupied no recognised station in life: they were mean, underhand people, in every

way unworthy of her. It was her first ball—it was the first time she had ever met with a man who had the breeding, the manners, and the conversation of a gentleman. Are these excuses for her, which I have no right to make? If we have any human feeling for human weakness, surely not!

"The meeting of that night decided their future. When other meetings had followed, when the confession of her love had escaped her, he took the one course of all others (took it innocently and unconsciously) which was most dangerous to them both. His frankness and his sense of honour forbade him to deceive her: he opened his heart, and told her the truth. She was a generous impulsive girl; she had no home ties strong enough to plead with her; she was passionately fond of him—and he had made that appeal to her pity, which, to the eternal honour of women, is the hardest of all appeals for them to resist. She saw, and saw truly, that she alone stood between him and his ruin. The last chance of his rescue hung on her decision. She decided; and saved him.

"Let me not be misunderstood; let me not be accused of trifling with the serious social question on which my narrative forces me to touch. I will defend her memory by no false reasoning—I will only speak the truth. It is the truth that she snatched him from mad excesses which must have ended in his early death. It is the truth that she restored him to that happy home-existence, which you remember so tenderly—which *he* remembered so gratefully that, on the day when he was free, he made her his wife. Let strict morality claim its right, and condemn her early fault. I have read my New Testament to little purpose indeed, if Christian mercy may not soften the hard sentence against her—if Christian charity may not find a plea for her memory in the love and fidelity, the suffering and the sacrifice, of her whole life.

"A few words more will bring us to a later time, and to events which have happened within your own experience.

"I need not remind you that the position in which Mr. Vanstone was now placed, could lead in the end to but one result—to a disclosure, more or less inevitable, of the truth. Attempts were made to keep the hopeless misfortune of his life a secret from Miss Blake's family; and, as a matter of course, those attempts failed before the relentless scrutiny of her father and her friends. What might have happened if her relatives had been what is termed 'respectable,' I cannot pretend to say. As it was, they were people who could (in the common phrase) be conveniently treated with. The only survivor of the family, at the present time, is a scoundrel calling himself Captain Wragge. When I tell you that he privately extorted the price of his silence from Mrs. Vanstone, to the last; and when I add that his conduct presents no extraordinary exception to the conduct, in their lifetime, of the other relatives—you will understand

what sort of people I had to deal with in my client's interests, and how their assumed indignation was appeased.

"Having, in the first instance, left England for Ireland, Mr. Vanstone and Miss Blake remained there afterwards, for some years. Girl as she was, she faced her position and its necessities without flinching. Having once resolved to sacrifice her life to the man she loved; having quieted her conscience by persuading herself that his marriage was a legal mockery, and that she was 'his wife in the sight of Heaven;' she set herself, from the first, to accomplish the one foremost purpose of so living with him, in the world's eye, as never to raise the suspicion that she was not his lawful wife. The women are few indeed who cannot resolve firmly, scheme patiently, and act promptly, where the dearest interests of their lives are concerned. Mrs. Vanstone—she has a right now, remember, to that name—Mrs. Vanstone had more than the average share of a woman's tenacity and a woman's tact; and she took all the needful precautions, in those early days, which her husband's less ready capacity had not the art to devise—precautions to which they were largely indebted for the preservation of their secret in later times.

"Thanks to these safeguards, not a shadow of suspicion followed them when they returned to England. They first settled in Devonshire, merely because they were far removed there from that northern county in which Mr. Vanstone's family and connexions had been known. On the part of his surviving relatives, they had no curious investigations to dread. He was totally estranged from his mother and his elder brother. His married sister had been forbidden by her husband (who was a clergyman) to hold any communication with him, from the period when he had fallen into the deplorable way of life which I have described as following his return from Canada. Other relations he had none. When he and Miss Blake left Devonshire, their next change of residence was to this house. Neither courting, nor avoiding notice; simply happy in themselves, in their children, and in their quiet rural life; unsuspected by the few neighbours who formed their modest circle of acquaintance to be other than what they seemed—the truth, in their case, as in the cases of many others, remained undiscovered until accident forced it into the light of day.

"If, in your close intimacy with them, it seems strange that they should never have betrayed themselves, let me ask you to consider the circumstances, and you will understand the apparent anomaly. Remember that they had been living as husband and wife, to all intents and purposes (except that the marriage service had not been read over them) for fifteen years before you came into the house; and bear in mind, at the same time, that no event occurred to disturb Mr. Vanstone's happiness in the present, to remind him of the past, or to warn him of the future, until the announcement of his wife's death reached him, in that letter from

America which you saw placed in his hand. From that day forth—when a past which *he* abhorred was forced back to his memory; when a future which *she* had never dared to anticipate was placed within her reach—you will soon perceive, if you have not perceived already, that they both betrayed themselves, time after time; and that your innocence of all suspicion, and their children's innocence of all suspicion, alone prevented you from discovering the truth.

"The sad story of the past is now as well known to you as to me. I have had hard words to speak. God knows I have spoken them with true sympathy for the living, with true tenderness for the memory of the dead."

He paused, turned his face a little away, and rested his head on his hand, in the quiet undemonstrative manner which was natural to him. Thus far, Miss Garth had only interrupted his narrative by an occasional word, or by a mute token of her attention. She made no effort to conceal her tears; they fell fast and silently over her wasted cheeks, as she looked up and spoke to him. "I have done you some injury, sir, in my thoughts," she said, with a noble simplicity. "I know you better now. Let me ask your forgiveness; let me take your hand."

Those words, and the action which accompanied them, touched him deeply. He took her hand in silence. She was the first to speak, the first to set the example of self-control. It is one of the noble instincts of women, that nothing more powerfully rouses them to struggle with their own sorrow than the sight of a man's distress. She quietly dried her tears; she quietly drew her chair round the table so as to sit nearer to him when she spoke again.

"I have been sadly broken, Mr. Pendril, by what has happened in this house," she said, "or I should have borne what you have told me better than I have borne it to-day. Will you let me ask one question, before you go on? My heart aches for the children of my love—more than ever my children now. Is there no hope for their future? Are they left with no prospect but poverty before them?"

The lawyer hesitated before he answered the question.

"They are left dependent," he said, at last, "on the justice and the mercy of a stranger."

"Through the misfortune of their birth?"

"Through the misfortunes which have followed the marriage of their parents."

With that startling answer he rose, took up the will from the floor, and restored it to its former position on the table between them.

"I can only place the truth before you," he resumed, "in one plain form of words. The marriage has destroyed this will, and has left Mr. Vanstone's daughters dependent on their uncle."

As he spoke, the breeze stirred again among the shrubs under the window.

"On their uncle?" repeated Miss Garth. She considered for a moment, and laid her hand sud-

denly on Mr. Pendril's arm. "Not on Michael Vanstone!"

"Yes: on Michael Vanstone."

A SOUTH KENSINGTON LEGEND.

ONCE upon a time, in a great hardware city which shall be nameless, a great hardware capitalist formed a pious wish. He had made money of the hardest kind from the hardest materials, and he wished to display his gratitude in some striking manner.

After many days and nights of anxious deliberation, assisted by the advice of many art fanciers and teachers, the happy idea was hit upon of erecting a hardware cathedral. From the days of St. Augustine to those of Cardinal Wiseman many religious temples had been raised in stone and brick, but no one had ever dedicated an iron cathedral to the presiding saint of hardware. A contract was accordingly given to a leading ironmaster, accompanied by a plan prepared by a true hardware architect, and in due time a long building was raised, which was half way between a factory and a cathedral. Great care had been taken to put in clerestory windows, as much like the windows of gunmakers' workshops as possible, and the iron columns were carefully moulded in that shape which hardware people thought was the only proper Gothic. The roof was made as bare and simple as the roof of a barn, and no labour or ingenuity was spared which could make the building look hard, practical, and unattractive. £ s. d. was marked in ornamental metal-work whenever it was thought necessary to employ a little decoration; maxims from Poor Richard's Almanack, Harrison's System of Book-keeping by Double Entry, the Counting-house Monitor, and the Complete Tradesman, were put up as "legends;" screens were erected in various parts, formed of dustpans, fish-kettles, and a variety of hardware productions; an organ was built in the centre of the nave, side by side with a lighthouse, a monument made of stomach-pumps, and an iron water-butt; and, finally, the whole structure was dedicated to St. Bilston the Black: a saint who made roasting-jacks in the fourth century at a place called Wolverhampton.

When this singular place was duly consecrated and opened for public worship, the hardware people—a peculiar race of beings—were in ecstasies. They thought nothing so perfect had ever been seen before, in the whole range of Oriental, classic, Gothic, and romantic architecture. Some even went the length of pooh-poohing Bramanti, Michael Angelo, and Wren, as men whose reputation was the growth of the dark ages.

St. Bilston the Black (before alluded to) was a very worthy and important saint in his way, but he was not the only member of his family who felt an interest in cathedrals. Several elder brothers were in existence, whose virtues had been embalmed in the best of stone, and they were not very tolerant of this new temple of iron. With

every disposition to respect the nineteenth century for what it really could do well, they thought it ought not to meddle with cathedral architecture. The canons of that art had been fixed by the great unknown, with the materials, proportions, and sites, of the world's cherished temples; and they thought that while thousands were daily making pilgrimages to the grand old shrines, no parody in iron should be allowed to stand in mocking magnificence.

As these discontented saints were as powerful as they were dissatisfied, not many hours were allowed to pass without something being done to relieve the world of this eyesore.

Being, like all saints, strictly conservative, they objected to destroy even such a thing as the hardware cathedral, and they therefore looked out for some appropriate spot in England to which they could at once remove it. After a very wide survey they selected a place called South Kensington, where a celebrated government engineer was trying his hand at a railway station. In the dead of the night the hardware cathedral was torn up by the roots; was carried to the great nursery-ground of science and art, where Shakespeare, taste, and the musical glasses, are forced in government hotbeds; and was dropped neatly into the middle of the unfinished railway station.

When the government engineer came out on the following morning to look at his work, he was startled by the change which a few hours had made in it. He rubbed his eyes, and looked at the building, and then he ran into his office, rubbed his eyes again, and looked at his plans, and after this he ran out into the muddy road, rubbed his eyes once more, and again stared at the building. A well-meaning, but injudicious friend, who was coming by at the time, congratulated him on the artistic effect of the structure; and this caused him to come to a hasty and unwise determination. Without wasting his time in trying to fathom a mystery that he felt was beyond his reach, he at once accepted the new hardware-ecclesiastical-railway-factory-Gothic building as his own design.

A new difficulty now arose which the unfortunate engineer had never anticipated. The place was spoilt as a railway station, and spoilt as a cathedral. The railway company for whom it was being built on speculation, refused to have anything to do with it, because it was not practical enough for their purpose; the Mormons, to whom it was offered as a temple, at a very moderate price, refused to buy it because it was too practical. The government engineer was thus left with this huge building on his hands, unable to find a tenant, and with every inducement to let it out piecemeal. One trader made him an offer for a part as a carriage repository; a philanthropic society wished to take the offices attached, to fit up as almshouses; the celebrated society for teaching grandmothers to suck eggs were half inclined to secure a large portion for their schools; and offers were made (much to the disgust of the South Kensington aristocracy) to rent the annexes as rope-walks

The bewildered engineer was on the point of closing with several of these offers, when the project was revived of a second International Exhibition. An offer was made in the lump for the whole structure, and joyfully accepted; but an objection was raised by the exhibition managers to the very practical character of the architecture. The engineer was so delighted at securing such excellent tenants that he at once devised a daring method of removing this objection. He planned two monster domes, which cost about thirty thousand pounds apiece, and these he placed in such a position at each end of the hardware cathedral that at most interior points they could not be seen at all, and at only one point could they both be seen together. Consequently, this sixty thousand pounds, invested in iron and glass, was behind a screen three-fourths of its time, and, when it peeped out, only one half of its value was generally visible. The ingenuity of this arrangement, elaborately devised to swallow up money and show little or nothing for it, was so apparent to the meanest capacity, that no one ever accused the building, after this, of being too practical.

PIERRE GRINGOIRE'S MIRROR.

ONCE upon a time—nearly three hundred and fifty years ago—there was a preacher who said to himself, "Others may have the doctrine, but I have the manner. I have the real turn of the wrist; the exact modulation which insinuates all that I teach infallibly into the hearer's mind." One Sunday afternoon the Thespis of the market-place, Master Jean du Pontalais, marching his gay theatrical troop through the street, drew up in a crossway under the windows of the church where this preacher was at work, and ordered his tambourine to play, for he desired to draw out the congregation and carry them away with him into the market-place, where he had set up his platform. The more noise the tambourine made, the more the preacher shouted. The contest became furious. At last the preacher cried, "Let somebody go out and stop that tambourine!" Several went out, but not to stop the tambourine. "Then," said the preacher, "truly I will go myself. Let nobody stir. I shall be back immediately." Going out into the crossway, furious with rage, he cried to the mummer, "Hallo! what has made you so bold as to play your tambourine when I am preaching?" Pontalais looked at him, and said, "Hallo! what has made you so bold as to preach when I am playing on my tambourine?" The preacher, taking a knife from his man, cut a great gash in the tambourine and stopped its music, then returned into the church to end his sermon. But Pontalais, going behind, slyly fitted the gash in the tambourine to the preacher's head, so that he wore it, unconsciously, like an Albanian hat when he remounted his chair; and as he urged the wrong that had been done him, everybody laughed. That story is told in an anecdote book by a chamberlain to Margaret of Navarre, sister to Francis the First of France; and it represents a

not uncommon contest in the France of that day between the player and the churchman.

We do not now hear for the first time of a Pope who is troubled, and a cause of trouble through the struggle to hold in the same hand temporal and spiritual authority. There was such a Pope—Julius the Second—in the days of Pontalais; he was opposed, not abetted by the government of France, and it is curious to see how he was dealt with in the market-place by the old French Aristophanes, Pierre Gringoire—the most famous of the old writers of *Follies and Farces*, which in the days of Louis the Twelfth and of Francis the First, his successor, held the mirror up to life, and were often applied as closely to the service of politics as the mystery plays to the services of religion.

Pierre Gringoire began to write, as a young man of about five-and-twenty, at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Between gross abuse and affected worship women lost the due honour of men in the old days of chivalry, talk as we may about their poetical delicacy. Termagant wives were a stock-subject of the early farces. One such woman, says a farce, having married her lover on written conditions that he should make beds, cook, clean, fetch, and carry, kept the husband to his bond, till finding himself a slave, he tilted her into the great tub on a washing-day. All her entreaties to be helped out are answered by the objection that no such duty is written in the bond. Her mother coming in, when she is at the last gasp, saves her, and she becomes a better wife for her experience. Somewhat thus ran the doggrel dialogue between the wife in the tub and her Shylock of a spouse:

- SHE. My good husband, save me, pray,
I'm already fainting away;
Put your hand in just a little bit.
- HE. In my paper that was never writ.
Down, down, down she must go.
- SHE. Ah, ah! Can you leave me so?
Help me at once or I'm dead.
- HE. "—You'll bolt the meal and bake the
bread,
Heat the oven and wash the linen—"
- SHE. Now the chill of the blood's beginning;
A moment more and I die.
Save me! O, why don't you try?
- HE. "—Wash the linen, cook the food—"
- SHE. Only a hand, do be so good!
- HE. "—Carry the grist up the hill to the
mill—"
- SHE. You're a beast of a cur! I shrivel! I
chill!
- HE. "—Make the beds the moment you're
drest—"
- SHE. Ah! you make my peril a jest!
- HE. "—Then go down and put on the pot—"
- SHE. Alas, where is my mother, Lolotte!
- HE. "—And sweep the kitchen and keep it
neat."
- SHE. Go fetch the parson to me, I entreat!
- HE. I've read the whole of the articles through,
But tell you without any more ado,
This duty was never set down by you.
Save yourself as well as you're able,
My duty now, is to rub the table.

SHE. Fetch me a little boy out of the street !
 HE. Is that in the bond ? I cannot see't.
 SHE. Come, come, your hand, my own my sweet ;
 I haven't strength to lift myself out.
 MOTHER. Hola ! ho !
 HE. Who knocks without ?
 MOTHER. Only a friend. There's nothing to fear.
 I just drop in to inquire, my dear,
 How all goes, and how's your poor head ?
 HE. Very well, since my wife's dead.

That is pretty exactly Pierre Gringoire's mind upon matrimony. Of his own wife, he says that he bought her for thirteen-pence, and wishes the fellow hanged who overcharged him. Gringoire wrote also a poem against "the abuses of the world." At first an inventor of the dumb show of the pantomimic street-play, he became also an author of political street dramas, having been affiliated to the "Children without Care"—les Enfants Sans Souci—and attained to the second rank among them, that of Mère Folle, or Foolish Mother. Most probably also he reached the first rank, and became supreme over these playful souls as Prince of Fools. There were three sort of dramatists in the France of that day—the priests, who produced Scripture mysteries ; the Bazochians, who produced worldly wisdom in moralities, and its lower follies in their farces ; and those "Children without Care," who, founding their system on the doctrine that, since Adam, most men have been fools, gave to poor humanity the name of folly, and under that name satirised it in their pieces. Louis the Twelfth was a popular king, against whom the chief indictment by his people was parsimony. The Sans Souci children sometimes aimed their shafts even at that, and he took no offence. He would rather, he said, that his economies should excite laughter, than that his wastefulness should be a cause of tears. Gringoire, in his robes as Foolish Mother—a monk's robe and hood garnished with a pair of ass's ears—appears in effigy before his books of this time, surrounded by a motto, claiming reason under all his jest—"Tout par Raison ; Raison par tout ; Partout Raison." He set himself forth as a laughing cynical philosopher. The dog, said Rabelais, is the most philosophical animal in the world. The only use he makes of a dry bone, is to apply all his power to the extraction of its marrow.

But to Gringoire, the narrow of his political street-plays was not the principle they advocated so much as the substantial reward he got for them. He had an eye rather to the king's favour than to the cause at stake, when he attacked Pope Julius in the Paris market-places with his "Play of the Prince of Fools and of the Foolish Mother." It was produced on Mardi Gras of the year fifteen hundred and eleven, when the contest between France and the Pope was at its height. Then the piece begins with the awakening of the Seigneur Jean de Pontalais—he of the tambourine and the great antic sword—to make ready for the assembling of the States-General of Folly. The deputies come and take their places, nobles first, then clergy, and then

foolish commonalty. All being in their seats, the Prince of Fools ascends his throne, attended by his faithful companion, the Lord of Gaiety. Compliments, containing political allusions, are then sung to him, after which, as Father of the People, he inquires as to the condition of his subjects. Accusations against the prelates rain at once from every side ; after which, the Foolish Commonalty raises its doleful complaint, and through it—some years before Luther—Gringoire predicts, as most shrewd men foresaw, the coming schism in the Church. But when, after a chorus in his praise, the Prince of Fools asks the Commons what they want, seeing that they have a wise prince and this and that excellent privilege, they answer, that for want of money their grief's very sore. A new personage now mounts the stage, before whom all—without exception of the Prince himself—make their obeisance. But the new comer explains apart to the audience that—

Holy Mother Church, I say I am,
 I anathematise and curse and cram ;
 But underneath this robe I wear another,
 Being, in truth, only the Foolish Mother.

The pretended Mother Church confides to Foolish Occasion and Foolish Confidence her project for uniting the temporal and spiritual power. Having won the beneficed clergy by promises of canonries and red hats, she attempts to seduce the French landed proprietors ; but they all oppose her, and swear fealty to the king, except the Seigneur de la Moon—emblem of versatility. The General of Childhood is hot against the popes, but False Mother Church herself is first to give the signal of war :

Prelates forward ! what ho ! what ho !
 To the assault, prelates ! to the assault !

Julius the Second, at Ravenna, acted such a part as well as Pierre Gringoire did in his person. The Prince of Fools is less hot than the General of Childhood. He hesitates to attack Mother Church. The seigneurs and the Foolish Commons assure him in vain that he may defend himself justly and canonically. His scruple can only be silenced by a sufficient answer to his question, "Is it really the Church ?" His friend, the Lord of Gaiety, to put an end to his doubt, suddenly plucks away the outer robe of the hypocrite, and reveals under it the Foolish Mother, with her ass's ears. So the political play ended.

A trilogy, or succession of three pieces, was the fashion. On the same day, therefore, and immediately after this new "Folly," Gringoire presented a new Morality that dealt still more irreverently with the temporal pretensions of the Pope. It was a dialogue between the Peoples of France and Italy on the subject of the *Obstinate Man*. Both complain ; for the lot of the peoples was then always to have matter of complaint. The People of Italy tells the People of France that complaint is unreasonable under a humane and honest king. How much worse is it for Italy, that is plagued with the pigheadedness of the *Obstinate Man*. The *Obstinate*

Man presently comes himself upon the scene, and describes himself in stanzas that might pass for a very good political description of the Obstinate Man of our own day, who, sitting in the same chair, troubles Italy with his tenacity, and has even condescended to keep brigands in his pay:

I cannot keep my hands from doing ill;
Thieves, gallows-birds, and liars work my will,
Brigands are my allies, whose purse I fill.

Every stanza ends with the refrain, "Look at me, all! I am the Obstinate Man." Careless of the threats of Divine Punishment, Gringoire's Obstinate Man took for his helpers two redoubtable demons, Simony and Hypocrisy, the latter describing himself as "given wholly to God, except body and soul." Punishment still threatens. Even Simony and Obstinacy repent; but the Obstinate Man holds to his course. The end is a resolve to assuage the griefs of the People of Italy without regard to the Obstinate Man, and at his expense.

Gringoire's new farce of "Saying and Doing," drawing its merriment from coarse jesting, ended the trilogy.

Pierre Gringoire, however, was not a great moral satirist. He fought the king's battle against the Pope when that was the battle of France, and after laughing as Foolish Mother at all courtiers, received, as part of his reward for political service, the post of Herald-at-Arms to the wife of the Duke of Lorraine, Renée de Bourbon. Then he ceased to write himself Foolish Mother Gringoire, but assumed the territorial style of Vaudemont, and profited so much from royal favour, that he had to defend himself against the questioning of friends, who asked why he was gone into that voluntary servitude. It was, he said, to get a better point of view for the study of shams;—wherein he proved himself a sham. Again, in spite of his earlier arguments against papal ambition, after the concordat, being paid by the religious fraternity of St. Louis to write a "Mystery of St. Louis," he therein satisfied the priests by exaltation of the Pope, and personification of the laity under the name of "Outrage." That Mystery, except that it retains some allegorical personages—Good Counsel, Chivalry, Populace, Outrage, Church—is a historical drama, running over the events of the life of the sainted king, and introducing historical characters, all with addition of a full measure of legend and miracle. A bear falls dead after having defiled a cross, raised by some captives in the Holy Land, and of two Turks, Brandeffer and Billonard, who raise their swords against it—one has his arm dried up, the other perishes. Among the episodes in this Mystery, is the story of a spoilt son who runs into excesses, and disdains the counsels of his mother. Many a time, she says, I have bought you from prison—if you are seized again by the law, by my soul I shall die of sorrow. "Eh!" he replies, "the justice is my cousin, that sets my mind at ease." But the cousin is Etienne Boileau, ancestor of the poet, and that Boileau was famous for his rough,

stern justice. The mother in despair goes at last to take counsel with Etienne, and ask him to reason with her boy. He receives her roughly, accuses her of having lost him by her own weakness, and promises to take him to task on the first opportunity. Occasion comes. The prodigal son asks money of his mother. "I have none," she answers. "Borrow," is his reply. She then herself sends him to borrow of their cousin the justice. But as the youth talks to his cousin in the strain he is used to hold towards his mother, and replies lightly to counsel, "Every one to his taste; nothing can change me," the justice changes him to a dead man, by having him hanged upon the stage for the edification of the audience. In another scene, three little children are also, before the people, piteously slain with the knife by order of the Sire de Coucy, for having killed a hare on his preserves. The king talks of hanging the Sire de Coucy, but he is a gentleman, and game is game. So he is spared to die at last, mourned by Church, Good Counsel, and even Populace.

Rough old days are reflected from Pierre Gringoire's Mirror of his Age. These present days are not altogether smooth days yet, and in some form the figure of the Obstinate Man still passes across what mirrors are held up to show the form and fashion of the time in France and Italy.

COMMITTED TO THE DEEP.

If a landsman threatened with consumption take a long sea-voyage, say to Australia and back, he probably comes home with a new lease of life. The pure open sea air is of all air the wholesomest; and though at river mouths in some hot climates, fevers and dysenteries may fairly enough be expected, yet those hot climates tend rather to cure than to cause lung disease. Who would suppose, then, that consumption, which has been so fatal in the army, is the great scourge of the British navy too? Dr. Gavin Milroy, with whose name and services as a medical inspector and sanitary commissioner in Jamaica, in the Crimea, and elsewhere, most people are familiar, has just issued, in the pamphlet form of a letter to Sir John Pakington, some valuable considerations on the health of the Royal Navy.

The subject is one of great interest as a mere question of national economy. By disease alone we lose every year out of the navy—out of a population of able-bodied men exempt from the tenderness or the infirmities of either childhood or old age—fifteen or sixteen men in every thousand; while the estimate for sickness amounts to the average loss of rather more than three weeks in a year from every man's duty. That is to say, from the whole available working power represented by the sailors of the navy one-seventeenth has to be struck out or cancelled by sickness. Of the men not on the sick list, it is to be remembered that on board ship every sick man's work must be distributed among the diminished number of the sound; and

labour done by overwork, diminishes in the long run a man's ordinary working power.

Let it not be supposed that there is culpable neglect of the health of seamen in the Royal Navy. So far is this from being the case, that the navy, with the problem how to keep in health a small community locked for months together within narrow space, was really the first school of sanitary science. Between the beginning and the end of the continental war, closed by the battle of Waterloo, so much had been done, that, by reason of improved health and chance of life in their crews, two ships, in 1815, were capable of more service than three of the same rate had been three dozen years earlier. But even in that improved state of things the yearly death-rate, during the last three years of the war, was one man in thirty. In those earlier days, when men seized by the press-gang, without much regard for bodily condition, were crammed into filthy receiving-vessels, where many perished of fever even before they went on board a man-of-war; when in the men-of-war the holds were noisome as the jails of the same day, and "the air used to become so contaminated," wrote Sir Gilbert Blane, a wise doctor, who knew what he had seen, "as in innumerable instances to produce instantaneous and irremediable suffocation;" when bad provisions were served out, and, lemon-juice not having come into use, crews were desolated year after year by scurvy; in those earlier days nearly a twelfth part of the whole force of men afloat, must have died every year; and more than a sixth part must have been every year cancelled by death and sickness. Yet when the mortality was so great, twenty years before the diet of the navy was improved, and lemon-juice was served out as a protection against scurvy, Captain Cook had sailed round the world, and had lived, with a hundred and twelve men, for three years in a ship well-cleaned, ventilated, and provisioned, bringing all the men home, except five, of whom four were lost by accidents, one only by disease. At the beginning of this century, too, when the frightful mortality among convicts sent to Botany Bay, attracted attention, Sir Gilbert Blane and Count Rumford fitted up an old East Indiaman, the *Glatton*, for conveyance of four hundred convicts. Of these, only seven died, five men and two women, of old-standing diseases which they had before they sailed; and the crew of a hundred and seventy, after a twelvemonth's absence, during which the vessel had been round the world, came back without loss of a single man. How was that result achieved? Especially by providing for the ventilation between decks. There were a series of tubes passing up from where the convicts slept, into the open air; there was a narrow opening amidships, along the whole length of the upper deck, protected by a pent-house covering raised a few inches above it, to keep out weather. These were always open, and there were also scuttles at the side, to open as weather permitted. What could be done was thus demonstrated, a dozen years before the

end of the great continental war: at which time, remarkable as had been the progress made upon the strength of sanitary experience, Sir Gilbert Blane still objected that the mortality of the navy from all causes—about thirty-three per thousand—was, as it ought not to be, double the then rate among persons of the same ages in civil life.

The study of health in the navy has for some years past been aided by the issue of very excellent statistical returns. We find, of course, that the sick rate varies greatly in our fleet, according to the stations at which ships are employed. It is (or was when last heard of) highest on the East Indian and China station, where, for the last three years of which the health reports are published, there was a daily average sick list of ninety-three men in the thousand. The sick-rate is lowest on the Australian station, where it is only half that on the coasts of India and China. Next in degree in sickness is—throughout we say is, referring only to the last reports in question—the body of ships engaged in irregular duty on various stations, which are by the rate of only one man in a thousand less healthy than the ships on the West Coast of Africa. On that dreaded coast, although the sick-rate is high—sixty-eight in a thousand—it does not approach the ninety-three in a thousand of India and China. The sick-rate at the other stations ranges from fifty-nine to fifty in a thousand, and they are beginning with that of fifty-nine and rising in average healthiness to that of fifty, the Cape of Good Hope, North America, and the West Indies, the Brazilian, the Pacific, the Mediterranean, the Home fleet—the Home service being exceeded in healthiness only by the Australian.

The death-rate at the several stations does not hold the same proportion to the sickness. There is not only more sickness, but more fatal sickness, in the East Indian and China service, where the mortality is as high as forty-seven or eight in a thousand; and the Brazilian fleet, though it stands only fifth in the order of sickness, ranks—with a wide interval—second in the average of deaths—five-and-twenty out of every thousand men. Even the North American and West Indian station, with a death-rate of twenty-four in a thousand, is worse in this respect than the West African, which has so traditionally had a name. The use of quinine, and avoidance of prolonged boat service at the mouth of rivers, have reduced the death-rate in our ships on the West African station to twenty or twenty-one per thousand. The irregular service, which stood very high for sickness, has a comparative low death-rate, about twelve. In the home fleet it is ten and a fraction; in the Australian, a fraction under ten; in the Pacific, lowest of all, between eight and nine. Two of the three years 'fifty-six, 'seven, and 'eight (the last three of which returns are published), were years of war for the West Indian fleet; and although the increased death-rate in them is due infinitely more to disease than to casualty of battle, yet

the state of war involved so frequently the sudden placing of crews under unhealthy conditions, that the death-rate in 'fifty-eight was twice what it had been in 'fifty-six. Unless especial care be taken and the right season for operation happen to suit the political conditions of the case, there is always a very great additional mortality produced by the sickness that will take fleets and armies at a disadvantage in the time of war. The last "operations" in China, following the attack on the Peiho forts, were made in a favourable month, May, and under special provision for the health of troops; the consequence was that, when in the beginning of July, after conclusion of the treaty, the troops re-embarked, there had been among them very little suffering from sickness.

Apart from causes of sickness lying ashore that produce indeed too much destruction of the sailor's health, but of which the prevention depends rather on wholesome provisions that should be made, and usually are not made, by the authorities of seaports than on anything that can be ruled or done on shipboard, the great causes of death in the navy are fevers, diseases of the bowels (dysentery, cholera, &c.), and diseases of the lungs, foremost among which is consumption. Ships themselves vary, of course, very much in sickness. Whatever the sailors suffer from the influence of climate, or the miasma of river-mouths under hot latitudes, bears small proportion to the suffering by imperfect sanitary condition of the ships themselves. The trimmest and cleanest ship may be a place in which health, strength, life, is assailed every hour. The cleanest and handsomest house may have under it some lurking cesspool, or damp unaired basement, to account for the pale cheeks of its inmates, the closed shutters, and the mutes at the door. An unsuspected heap of rotten matter in the hold, may yield the fever poison that shall waste a fine ship's crew. The emanation from the bodies of men—hard working, moreover, and less than half washed—packed too closely together in their berths in an ill-ventilated space between decks, yields a sure and not slow poison. This is the one great defect left to be remedied in our well-managed men-of-war. It is a main source of fever, and the chief source of the consumption which, in spite of every other influence that tends to check it, makes fearful head among our seamen.

In 'fifty-five, the crew of the Hannibal, numbering eight hundred and thirty, when in the Black Sea, besides suffering especially from bowel complaints, had a fourth part of the men down with typhus fever. She suffered five times more than other ships of her size on the same duty. In the year following, fever clung to the ship in the Mediterranean, for it depended on a cause within. The Conqueror and Centurion, with crews of nine hundred and seven hundred and forty, respectively, served together in the Mediterranean for two years, during which one ship had ten times more fever in it than the other. The Dauntless, which had lost nearly seventy of

her crew in a few weeks from yellow fever when on the West Indian station three years before, had a high fever rate during the whole time of her service in the Baltic and the Black Sea. Sometimes, a ship has become so notoriously sickly, that her name has become a name of dread, and has been changed. In the case of one such ship, the Rosamond, formerly the Eclair, the ventilation between decks was found to be most imperfect, and "there was a considerable accumulation of filth under the magazine." Forty cases of fever broke out between April and June, 'fifty-six, in the Eurotas, while in the Mediterranean. Her medical officer was "unable to account for the disease, unless it arose from the extreme lowness and closeness of the deck on which the men were berthed." In May, 'fifty-eight, there was an outbreak of fever in the Valorous, when on the way from Ferrol to Plymouth: the sole ascertainable cause, defective ventilation. "Air," said Sir Gilbert Blane, "contaminated by foul and stagnant exhalations, particularly those from the living body, is the ascertained cause of typhus fever, which has been a more grievous and general source of sickness and mortality in the navy, than even the scurvy. The infection of fever is generated by the breath and perspiration of men, crowded for a length of time in confined air, and without the means of personal cleanliness." Freer ablution is no doubt practised by sailors than by soldiers, among whom, with all the enforced regard to cleanliness of dress, real cleanliness of person is under our barrack system still impossible. The smell of a marching regiment is sometimes intolerable. The state of the air where men sleep in barracks, is as serious a cause of invaliding and death, in the army, as the want of pure air for the sailors in their berths between decks, is of invaliding and death in the navy. Lord Herbert put the country on the road to mighty changes; and lives enough to make a brigade of men, are now saved every year through his exertions. There is still more to be done. Wholesome air to sleep in, is a first requisite of health, certainly not yet secured in every barrack, or on board of every Queen's ship. Fever broke out in the Princess Royal when she was conveying troops from Malta to Alexandria, in January, 'fifty-eight. Boisterous weather made it necessary to keep the ports, both on the main and lower deck, barred in, during nearly the whole of the passage. The disease was checked by bringing the men up to the main deck. But the Princess Royal, though a new ship, had been always sickly; imperfect ventilation of the sleeping space, being the sole assignable reason. Whatever the disease, the want of fresh air by the sick will beget or strengthen it. The Megæra, in 'fifty-eight, put off from Calcutta with cholera on board. At sea the cholera increased. There came boisterous weather, the main deck ports had to be kept shut, and the sick therefore were brought on deck and placed under an awning. From that time, though an eighth part of the crew had perished, and the disease was then

making head, the cholera subsided, and soon disappeared. In the *Britannia*, when she was in the Black Sea, just before the sailing of the expedition to the Crimea, within five days two hundred and twenty-nine of a crew of nine hundred and twenty were attacked with cholera, and of these one hundred and thirty-nine died. There were also four hundred cases of diarrhoea. The ship had put to sea, to get rid of the disease on its first showing itself, and the change seemed to be beneficial until rough weather came, and the lower deck ports had to be closed. Then, on the following night, cholera broke out with all its fury. As soon as the crew could be removed into some empty transports, the scourge vanished, after destroying twice as many men as were killed in the whole fleet by the enemy's fire in the attack on the sea batteries of Sebastopol.

There is need, in fact, to follow the lead of Count Rumford and Sir Gilbert Blane in securing for the sleepers between decks a system of ventilation that no stress of weather can destroy.

During the three years under consideration ('fifty-six, 'seven, and 'eight), the deaths by disease were two thousand one hundred and twenty-five; to this we have to add the invaliding of men discharged as permanently sick, and who go to swell the tables of mortality ashore. In the same years, four thousand two hundred and twenty-one men were discharged as invalids, so that the average loss to the fleet by sickness and death was two thousand one hundred men a year. It was least in 'fifty-six, and most in 'fifty-eight, when it reached a number equal to that of the combined crews of three of the largest line-of-battle ships in the navy; the loss being, it is to be remembered, among picked men of an age when death does not come to them in the healthy course of nature. At the same time it is to be added that under the healthy conditions which now prevail in ships of war on the home station, or on stations where the mortality is even less, the death-rate from all causes is only two or three in a thousand greater than that among the picked men, of the London Fire Brigade, and is not sensibly greater than that for men of the same ages in all England.

In our home fleet, for example, there are but eight or nine deaths in a year from fever. The same men in their old homes ashore, would yield more cases. The great fever station at home is Sheerness and the estuary of the Medway, the ships anchored high up the Medway generally suffering more than those at Sheerness. The people afloat and ashore, in ship and dockyard, and in the town of Sheerness, suffer so much from malaria, that in Chatham Hospital, Sheerness is said to be spoken of as "the African station of our home service." There is three or four times as much fever in the Mediterranean as in the home fleet. There, in the course of a twelvemonth, about seventy men in a thousand are attacked, and two in the seventy die. But the West Indian station is the fever station, and of half the annual deaths from fever in our service yellow fever is the cause. Within the last fifteen or twenty years, yellow fever seems to have

been more destructive to our sailors than even in the old bad times of neglected hygiene.

The reason of this we may find in the fact that all the vessels most severely smitten have been steamers. The excessive heat on board aggravates the defect of ventilation; there is also liability in steamers to the accumulation of offensive rubbish under the machinery: which adds to the impurity of the hot air in the between decks. A particular part of a ship is thus sometimes marked for its deadliness. In the cases of two ships, the *Argus* and *Virago*, it was "about the after part of the lower deck and in the fore part of the engine-room," the mortality being greatest among the men berthed near these parts; and in the *Leopard*, nearly all the attacks occurred among the men living in the steerage, where they had been more exposed than the rest of the crew to "an offensive effluvia which had for some time previously issued from the hold and spirit-room." On examination, much black mud, mixed with half-rotten chips, which had been accumulating for a long time, was found in the limbers. "The exhalations from that part of the ship, the surgeon believed, were the cause of the yellow fever, as the malarious influences from the shore were the cause of the cases of remitting fever."

Take the yellow fever crew out into airy quarters ashore, and the disease is checked. It all but vanished in the case of the *Argus*, after the crew, sick and well, had been landed at Bermuda. Yellow fever is, in fact, the typhus of the West Indies, bred like typhus, and to be met with the same measures of prevention. The removal of a ship to a cooler latitude is a remedial measure. But above all things, the crew, either sick or well, must not be cribbed or cabined between decks, without ample ventilation. To bring the sick on deck under awnings, or to send them ashore (they have gone to lie and heal among the patients of the well-ventilated Barbadoes Hospital, without spreading infection in a single case), is to arrest the disease pretty surely. Something is due, of course, to other causes. It is hard to say why there was no yellow fever on the Brazilian station until twelve years ago, when it appeared for the first time, and has since added much to the mortality among our sailors on that coast.

Not less famous than the West Indian Islands are for the favouring of fever, are the East Indian and China stations for the breeding of cholera, dysentery, and diarrhoea. Of not quite five hundred deaths from dysentery and diarrhoea in three years, four hundred and twenty-five occurred on this station. Of one hundred and sixty cholera cases, all, except only twenty-two, occurred in these waters: usually between May and November. Whatever may be the existing cause, and that is open to discussion, it is certain that among the predisposing causes few are more sure than an over-crowded and ill-ventilated space between decks for the hammocks of the sailors.

But of all diseases fostered by want of ventilation, those of the lungs are, as we set out

by saying, the most universal, and consumption is the most common. They represent no less than a sixth part of the entire sickness throughout the service, clinging to our sailors even in the mild climate of the Mediterranean, and under the bright skies of the tropics. Here, also, there is a marked and instructive difference between ships lying side by side on the same service. In some ships it is no slight matter that there is facility for getting warm food after a cold and wet watch before turning in. "Generally speaking," says the report for 1856, "the comparative frequency of inflammatory affections of the lungs, in the home force, is to be ascribed to the exposure of the men to cold and wet, which it is difficult to avoid when there is a necessity for employing them on dockyard duties and in boats, and their being quartered in cold, damp, and windy hulks during the winter months, where they have few opportunities for drying their clothes." As showing the difference in different ships' crews employed in similar work, it is stated that "in the Royal William, the Hawke, Formidable, and Blenheim, there did not occur a single case of inflammation of the lungs and pleura, while in other ships they amounted, in some instances, to eight, and even to fifteen or sixteen."

During three years, three hundred and thirty-nine of the deaths from chest diseases were caused by consumption: one hundred and eleven only arising from all other affections of the throat and lungs. In the same period, between five and six hundred seamen were discharged consumptive, most of whom would die within six months after discharge. That was a number three times larger than the number of discharges for all other forms of chest disease.

Consumption among soldiers was, by the report of the recent royal commission on the sanitary state of the army "traced in a great degree to the vitiated atmosphere generated by over-crowding and defective ventilation, and the absence of proper sewerage in barracks." Special inquiry into the prevalence of lung disease in certain districts of England, led Dr. Greenhow to the conclusion that it proceeded from working and sleeping in ill-ventilated rooms. The following description of the berthing of the men at night, and of its consequences, was given in the First Statistical Report of the Navy in 1840. "The usual space between the suspending points (clues) of the hammocks is from seventeen to eighteen inches, so that, when they are extended by the beds, their bodies are in contact. The effect is to bring the bodies of the men into contact in greater or less number, according to the size of the ships. When at sea, with a watch on deck, the accumulation and pressure are reduced by a half; but when in secure harbours, five hundred men perhaps sleep on one deck, their bodies touching each other over the whole space laterally, and with very little spare room lengthways. The direct results of elevated temperature and deteriorated air, may be conceived; but it is not easy to con-

ceive the amount of the first, nor the depressing and debilitating power of both, as measured by sensation, within the tropics. The tendency of such a state of things must be to subvert health, and lay the subject of it open to attacks of serious disease."

Many important reforms have been effected, some partial reforms in this direction also; but it is to this part of the ship, and the arrangements for the sleeping of the sailors, that attention may be paid with the largest resulting gain of life, health, and efficiency of service. The necessity has become more pressing, since the general use of steam power in the service. Almost all recent instances of extraordinary mortality have occurred in steam vessels. So writes Dr. Gavin Milroy, to whose letter the public is indebted for the fresh attention now called to this subject.

The mortality by war in the navy, as in the army, is inconsiderable even in hot war times when compared with the loss by disease. In the fleets during the Russian war, including the marines and naval brigade serving with the army before Sebastopol, one thousand five hundred and seventy-four died of disease, but only two hundred and twenty-seven died of wounds received in action. In our fleet during the China war of 'fifty-seven, thirty-eight men died of wounds received in action, while three hundred and twenty-seven fell by the unseen enemy, disease. In the year 'fifty-eight, on the India and China station, thirty-five men were killed in action, while five hundred and fifty-one were victims of disease.

The need in our ships seems to be of more than ventilating tubes. Why is it insisted that the lower deck in two-decked and frigate-built ships, and the lower and middle in three-deckers, shall be the only decks for sleeping the whole crew? What is there, except blind adherence to usage, that should prevent the men from being distributed over all the decks, to their immense gain in space and air, and therefore in health, life, and efficiency?

GENTLE SPRING.

WE are apt to think that, to see wondrous phenomena, we must travel into distant regions. If for "wondrous" we read "unaccustomed," the proposition is perfectly correct. Of what we are used to, we think but little; familiarity has bred indifference. But to strangers arriving from the uttermost parts of the earth our own climate offers much that is striking. The native of northern Ultima Thules—of the Faroe Islands, the Shetlands, St. Kilda, Iceland—is especially fascinated by our trees. To him they are not inanimate, impassive things; they are living hamadryads—attractive wood nymphs—captivating him to such an extent that he can hardly tear himself away from them. His immediate impulse is to abduct them forcibly, and fix them in his own treeless land. He longs for trees to adorn his dwelling, with an ardour similar to

that with which the wifeless settler entreats the emigration of women, to render Home possible in his adopted land. The beau-ideal of domestic bliss has ever been a Family assembled beneath the shade of their own tree—no matter what—fig-tree, vine, olive, oak, or fir. The Northman who has penetrated to the far South—perhaps, even, to the valleys of Mull and Argyle—scarcely knows how to choose between the symmetrical stature of the pine, the drooping tresses of the birch, and the leafy arms of the beech, stretched out to welcome him. They have voices too: they whisper, they threaten, they lament, they allure. Go and spend only a month at John o'Groat's house; on your return to your woodland park, or your blooming orchard, you will fully feel the attractive influence of trees.

But all trees are not the same trees. Young people of English parentage, born and brought up amidst tropical verdure, sent home to Europe to complete their education, and arriving in winter, have been greatly astonished. How curious! Trees without leaves! And so intricate and finely-branched! The solid stems seem to bear a Medusa's head of interlacing twigs, multitudinous yet orderly, if you examine their disposition and arrangement. Surely no gardener's art can keep them alive in that unclad exposed condition! They must perish, starved into lifeless brooms! Still, they are graceful, even in death.

We are walking through the wood after a calm night of hoar-frost. A mist from the meadow has been stealing through it, silvering every twig with an ornament, beside which silver itself is dull. It is a forest of gigantic ostrich feathers, such as no Eastern potentate can produce to decorate the courts of his palace, or to wave around his mausoleum. The sun breaks forth: his ray, though feeble, is yet powerful enough to scatter around us a shower of diamonds. And then, the snowflakes, as they fall! How completely novel! What a realisation of the impossible! The King of Siam might well believe in the mountain from whose top you may knock a nail into the sky, while he refused to believe that water could harden so as to allow an elephant to walk across a river. And you tell us that, in a few short weeks, this dazzling scene of barrenness will be shady, leafy, full of blossoms, song-birds, and butterflies? We must watch the coming of the change you call Spring, for no similar changes are to be witnessed in our ever-green, ever-sultry Asiatic home.

In another way are we favoured in Great Britain and Ireland: there are countries which *have* a spring, and there are countries which, although experiencing the extremes of heat and cold, have none. For a week's great thaw—flooding you with torrents of dirty water, making roads and garden-walks alike impassable, depositing the collected filth of winter wherever the retiring inundation shall leave it, threatening bridges, and rendering ferry-boats impossible by an irresistible stream of fresh-water icebergs—is not a season;

it is a catastrophe, a break-up, for which we have no word so expressive as the French *débâcle*. Neither is the opening of the windows of heaven, after a six months' or a twelvemonth's drought—during which the collecting naturalist has to dig for torpid specimens of insects, spiders, and lizards, and during which you may pitch your tent over the spot where a crocodile lies buried in the hardened soil—Spring. Neither is the substitution of tepid cataracts from the skies for whirlwinds of burning dust upraised from the plain—when lethargic fish, crustaceans, beetles, snails, not to mention enormous boas, wake up from their feverish sleep in the hard-baked mud; when the scanty hortus siccus still remaining on the land drinks water like a sponge, and, with a convulsive effort to profit by the occasion, concentrates its powers in the production of a few new shoots and flowers and seeds—neither is this Spring. It is a resuscitation from the trance almost of fossil nature; it is a short-enduring spasmodic manifestation of vitality; but it is not the gentle yet steady influence which, with us, brings forth flowers, vegetables, and fruit, each after its kind. In those regions, whose climate alternates periodically between parching heats and tempestuous rains, foretold by earthquakes—in those regions, daisies, snowdrops, and primroses are visions of another world; buttercups and butter are alike unknown; strawberries and cream are incredible fables; radishes, though not square, are impossible roots, for you cannot extract what does not exist; sea-kale and rhubarb tart are as mythological as the ambrosia of the gods and goddesses; while the words "spring salad," "green peas," "asparagus," serve merely as spells to bring the water into your mouth.

There are also countries where, if you like, you may have no summer, nothing but winter, then a long spring, and then winter again. For this, you have not to go very far—that is, the journey is short in these railroad days. Arriving in the Oberland in April, you have only to pitch your tent at the edge of the melting snow, following it as it retreats upward before the advancing breath of summer, to behold a succession of little springs, as the green sward is exposed to air and sunshine. You will have crocuses in May and June, and, at the end of August, the dear little Alpine linaria will be still coming into bloom at the glacier's edge. You will behold patches of azure gentian so like a little bit dropped out of the sky, that you look upward to see whence it has fallen. The cows and their keepers are well aware of all this and more. "Excelsior" is their motto. By constantly climbing, they contrive to give you spring grass-butter, and spring cream cheese, until the snows of October put a sudden extinguisher on vernal ideas, and drive them all down together to their well-built stables in the valley.

Spring, in the United Kingdom, is not merely a lovely sight; it is a pleasant feeling. Lead a

blind person round your garden on a genial sunshiny day, and he will tell you at once,

Spring is coming; Spring is coming;

Hark! the little bee is humming.

Nor is the bee needful to give the information. His own sensations serve to apprise him that the sun is climbing rapidly up the ecliptic. Every sound, ringing more clearly than heretofore, tells him that there is more space in the atmosphere; the thick heavy curtain of mist and fog is upraised and withdrawn, at least temporarily and partially; there is an odorous freshness in the air; the earth feels firmer under his tread, promising a supply of that March dust a bushel of which is worth a king's ransom. The lower creatures, even the sightless worm, manifest an instinctive foretaste of the coming change. Winter is quite inadequate to repress the elastic energies of Spring. Under the tardy snow the pansy will blossom, the strawberry plants will prepare their flowers. To retard the growth and blooming of plants much behind their due season, is one of the more difficult problems in gardening. A tyro is able to forward them; he can show you moss roses in May; but he cannot show you lilies of the valley in August; while not a few clever gardeners are able to supply you, at the cost of x (the unknown quantity) shillings per pound, with fresh ripe grapes on New Year's Day. Spring is thus a high-mettled racer whom you may spur on to almost any pace, but whom you cannot keep lagging at the starting-post when once his rival steeds are off and away.

Without being sensitive to the manifestations of the newly discovered primordial power, Od (if the discovery be made), without pretending to see in utter darkness, to perceive that our friend's hands and heads are phosphorescent, to distinguish the north from the south pole of a magnet by the touch only, to behold luminous clouds emanate from a bell as long as it is kept ringing, with the rest of the catalogue of odic impressions—many persons are able to divine the state of things around them, by their feelings. The impression of season and of weather is particularly lasting. A bright Spring day never comes to greet you without being accompanied by a tail of memories of the spring days of other times and localities; how you looked over the precipice on the Island of Capri, whence Tiberius tossed his dishonoured victims; how you gathered bouquets of vernal squills in the chesnut groves of Tuscany; how you awoke to the sounds of curious chimes as the sun rose over Belgian cities; how the salmon in highland streams refused your ill-thrown fly, and what an electric shock it gave you to feel you had hooked a fish at last. On no stronger thread than an April breeze, may hundreds of such pearls be strung.

Altitude, again—a small difference of altitude—is a physical condition which affects the sensorial faculties, and awakes the reminiscences of many persons. Have you no antipathy to a bedroom on the ground-floor? Even in a house on the top of a hill, do you not prefer, as a

lodging by night, and perhaps by day, the first floor to the one below? In the fifth or sixth story of a Paris house—Alphonse Karr talks of dwelling in the fourteenth, in the days of his youth—do you ever lose the consciousness of your elevation, or suppose yourself in the entresol? Ladies long resident in cities, accustomed to go up-stairs to the drawing-room, feel comparatively out of their element in one which allows them to step at once into a flower-garden without breaking their necks from a balcony.

At the watershed, the topmost ridge of any lofty mountain pass—the St. Gothard or the Simplon—do you not recognise sensations similar to those experienced at the top of other mountain passes? Nay, more; the analogies which physical geographers have established between altitude and latitude are confirmed by yourself in the counties of Caithness and Wick, on comparing your bodily impressions there with those experienced in the uplands of Bavaria, before making the grand plunge from it, down to the Tyrol and Italy. A considerable elevation above the sea is betrayed by certain indescribable personal hints, as surely as it is a sign of change of weather when old Betty's joints are on the rack.

Spring is not only a Season; Spring is a Force, which begins to manifest itself at an earlier period, and in more out-of-the-way places than very many people suspect. The phenomena occurring on and about St. Valentine's Day are unmistakable symptoms that something unusual is in the wind. Birds don't choose their mates, nor are postage-stamps purchased by millions, for nothing. But who would look for the first signs of the coming Spring, at the bottom of rivers, lakes, and ditches? The mysterious influence, nevertheless, penetrates the bed of waters, and works unsuspected at the preparation of next summer's crop—of weeds?—no; grant them the dignity of aquatic plants. Before the Sun has walked into the Ram, the water-lily has thought of unfolding new leaves, and the water-soldier bedecks himself with starry green cockades. The start of growth once made, there is no further stoppage or check; spring frosts cannot penetrate the liquid mantle which envelops their tender foliage; the malignant rays of the "red moon"—the moon which scowls on and blights the earth between the Paschal and the Pentacostal moons—are powerless to injure, when they reach the bottom of the gliding stream.

This unseen vivifying force is especially manifested in things that are invisible to the multitude. Early Spring, the moment of nature's revival, is the time to search for protozoa, creatures who represent the earliest dawn, the very first beginnings of animated life. Submit this droplet of ditch water to your microscope, with a magnifying power of from two hundred and twenty to two hundred and fifty diameters, and you see—what? A bit of clear, trans-

parent, colourless jelly, apparently about the size of a pea. It is called *Amœba princeps*, otherwise *Proteus* (although the latter name has been less appropriately given to the swan-necked animalcule, quite a different creature), for shape it has none. Its outline varies from second to second. It has really no parts or organs; but instead thereof it pushes out from its mass a protuberance here, and draws in a hollow there. The pea becomes a bean, or a boot, or a hand with half a dozen gouty fingers; often, it resembles some island you have seen in the map of the Indian Archipelago. It progresses, gliding slowly across the field of view, drawing in after it its irregular protuberances as it goes. It never, through carelessness, leaves any portion of itself behind it. Its motion alone would not entitle it to be considered an animal; for many microscopic plants frisk about, or writhe and twist, or slide along with far more energetic movements. But the *Proteus* eats; note in its substance sundry coloured morsels it has swallowed; and now, on its way coming in contact with a dainty bit, it annexes it—enveloping it entirely in its own proper substance. As the *Proteus*, when it chooses, can be all limbs, so, when it requires, is it all stomach. It eats, and is therefore an animal. It does not feed indiscriminately, but lets some prey go, while it appropriates others; therefore it has a will of its own. Learned men tell us that the jelly of which its bodily substance is composed, is "sarcode." Sarcode is further capable of secreting shells, many of great symmetry and beauty, besides the substance known as sponge. The portion of sarcode which sponges in their growing and living state contain, constitutes their only claim to belong to the animal kingdom. Indeed, sponges begin life as solitary, naked *Amœbæ*, who club together to build themselves a skeleton *pro bono publico*. Of course the sarcode, of the consistence of white of egg, has disappeared, long before sponge reaches our washing-stands.

And is mighty Man acted on by the same natural stimulus which awakens creatures who are lower than the starfish and the worm? The answer is read at once in the elastic step, the brighter eye, the rosier cheek, the plump cherry lip of youth. It is legible also in the fitful effort with which elderly invalids gird up their loins to perform the concluding stages of their journey of life. Spenser tells us that over earthly things *mutability* is the reigning power:

So forth issued the seasons of the year;
First, lusty Spring, all delight in leaves of flowers
That freshly budded, and new blossoms did bear
(In which a thousand birds had built their bow'rs
That sweetly sung to call forth paramours):
And in his hand a javelin he did bear,
And on his head (as fit for warlike Stours)
A gilt engraven morion he did wear;
That as some did him love, so others did him fear.

—With reason feared him, propitiating his forbearance with periodical bleedings and doses of medicine. Spring, who gives strength to the

strong, spreads snares for the feeble. By his bright sunshine he tempts them to venture prematurely out of their wearisome winter retreats, perhaps even to cast aside their tried defensive woollen armour; and then, with blast of his cutting winds, or with the wet blanket of his chilling fogs, or with his sharp artillery of hail and sleet, he extinguishes the flickering flame of life. May Hill is a hard climb for the wayworn, the sickly, and the burdened with years. Before reaching the top, many are they who lie down to slumber by the roadside, unable to attain the summit of the pass, and to make the gentle descent into June.

Spring, therefore, is to many the close, as it is to multitudes of living creatures the commencement of their earthly existence. A year beginning precisely at midnight, as soon as the sixtieth minute past eleven P.M. of the thirty-first of December is concluded, is chronologically convenient, business-like, and exact; but the Roman year, which allowed the dark inclement period to pass before it ventured to step out of doors, is far more natural and intelligible for amateurs. What is the order of the seasons? Spring, summer, autumn, winter. How run the signs of the Zodiac? The Ram, the Bull, the Heavenly Twins, the Crab, the Lion, the Virgin, and the Scales. The minute and the hour of the day in March when the sun invades the territory of Aries is the beginning of the year, according to the Calendar of Nature, when a not very old but nearly forgotten almanack tells us that the republican months *Pluviose* and *Ventose* are succeeded by *Germinial* and *Floreal*. So be it. May this year's March and April showers be plentifully followed by May flowers!

ABOARD THE CONSTELLATION.

"GOING for seventeen hundred dollars! a shameful, aggravating sacrifice! No advance on seventeen hundred dollars? Gentlemen, gentlemen, be spry with your biddings, and don't let such valuable property be sweepered out of the U-nited States for a fractional splinter of its worth! The splendid yacht *Constellation*, with all her new stores and fixings, cabins paneled with maple and mahogany, mirrors, pictures, new sails as white as the President's best table-napkins, masts as tough as a hickory fishing-rod, going to be knocked down to a foreign bidder for the ridiculous rate of seventeen hundred dollars."

This fervid burst of oratory was uttered in the Auction Mart of Buffalo city, on a broiling August day; and the auctioneer stopped to take breath, wiped his forehead, and kept the ivory hammer still suspended in mid air.

There was a hum among the spectators—a hum and a smothered laugh, but no effort to avert the "sacrifice" so much deplored by the man of sales. One Quaker flour-dealer remarked that, had the craft possessed more stowage, he might have made an offer; but that such tawdry gimcracks were useless to a sober citizen.

"Don't libel the property, brother Broadbrim," exclaimed the flushed auctioneer; "and you, gentlemen, let me requisition you to throw aside your supineness, and bid for the lot as becomes the land of enlightenment. No advance? I wish I had her at New York, I do! I wish she were lying off Brooklyn, and then the force of competition would—"

"Never mind the force of competition, Mr. Kettering. You're longer-winded than a Congress-man. Call the next lot, mister, and knock this'n down to the cap., can't you? We've listened to enough bunkum about that tarnation toy-shop schooner."

Mr. Kettering made one more appeal. He begged of the audience not to "give the Britisher a triumph," not to "let this gorgeous yacht, comparable to the gilded galley of the European princess Cleopatra the Great go out of the country;" but, finally, he rapped down the hammer of fate.

"Cap., she's yours."

I was the captain. Attracted by certain glowing advertisements in the American and Canadian papers, I had come across to Buffalo to view the yacht and be present at the sale; and now I was the undisputed owner of the schooner Constellation, a craft fit for yachting, and fit for nothing else. Her lines were graceful and good, and she lay like a duck upon the water, with her taper masts and bright paint: a strange contrast to the uglier and more serviceable vessels on the lake. But her tonnage was trifling, her speed by far surpassed her power of carrying freight, and there was some foundation for the scorn with which the traders of Buffalo regarded her. For wafting flour-barrels, wheat, Indiana cheese, and Illinois apples, eastward, and of bearing European goods and Lowell cotton-prints, westward—she was as unfit as a racehorse for ploughing. A melancholy story, which I heard in after-days, but of which I then knew but little, attached to her. She had been built and decorated for a young Buffalo exquisite, the heir of a wealthy townsman, who had acquired costly habits in New York. By herself, the yacht might have been all very well, and might even have kept her feather-brained owner out of mischief; but, unluckily, young Breckett had a taste for play, and preferred ecarté and lansquenét, with fashionably high stakes, to the cribbage and "poker," for quarter dollars, of his native province. When a man seeks his own ruin, whether in the Old World or in the New, he seldom has long to wait. Two gamblers from the Empire City visited Buffalo in the course of a professional tour, became acquainted with the younger Breckett, and emptied his pockets as the price of their intimacy. To replenish his purse and have his "revenge," the silly young man was tempted to borrow the contents of his father's cash-box, in the idle hope of replacing the money he had taken when luck should turn. The stolen dollars and golden eagles brought with them no change of fortune; they soon chinked in the purses of the sharpers; and the wretched dupe ended his desperate folly by blowing his

brains out. Thus it occurred that the pretty schooner, almost new from the builder's hands, was brought to the hammer at Buffalo mart, and sold for a fraction of her original cost.

I was then a raw emigrant; not one of those emigrants who cross the Atlantic to conjure fortune with axe and ploughshare, but one of the army of small capitalists. The price of my captain's commission in the Hundred and Ninth, added to a small sum in the funds, sufficed to purchase a good many acres of land in West Canada, mostly overgrown with rough wood, but of fair natural fertility. There was a good storehouse on the "farm," as I modestly called what, in respect to acreage at least, was worthy to be dubbed an estate; and though I had been more lucky than shrewd in my selection, old settlers told me that I had secured a remunerative bargain. Summer came round, and events proved that the old settlers were right. There were some "botoms" of fine alluvial land, that gave a first-rate wheat crop with scanty trouble. There were good natural meadows for hay, the proportion of barren ground was below the average, and a friendly creek afforded water-carriage for my felled timber to the broad sheet of Lake Erie. If not an experienced farmer, I was no sluggard; my head man was honest and skilful; and I found myself thriving beyond my first hopes. Then, I had leisure time on my hands; I had some money to spare; I saw and was attracted by the advertisements of the intended sale of the Constellation; and I went over to Buffalo to examine the much-lauded vessel. What I saw of her pleased me greatly. She was swift and handsome, her sails, cables, anchors, and cordage—everything, from the stewpans of the cook's caboose, to the boats towing astern—was in first-rate order. She would not need repairs for a long time, and a very small crew would suffice to handle her. I was born on the banks of Southampton Water, and was passionately fond of boating from a boy. My father had owned a yacht, and I had been used to knocking about the Solent and the Channel at an early age; while, in the transports that had the honour of conveying our regiment to India, Malta, and Bermuda, I had kept watch and ward, and had added to my stock of sea-lore. I was, therefore, fairly qualified to be a commander of a well-found craft in the fresh-water navigation of a lake: although Erie, shallower of the American inland seas, is liable to tempests of peculiar fury.

I bought the Constellation, paid for her, hired a couple of boatmen out of work to help me across with her, and left Buffalo under easy canvas: steering my new purchase in person, and feeling a pardonable pride in the elegant appearance and good behaviour of my little vessel. Half Buffalo sauntered to the quays to see us off. We had the topsails set, the foresail clued up, and the large mainsail gently swelling to the light air that turned the glittering sheet of water into frosted silver. Many duller sailers were crawling

along, but the yacht went through the ripple like a wild swan, cutting through the water with her knife-like bows, and heeling prettily to the breath of the south-easter. Although I had hauled down the star-spangled flag of America, and had replaced it with a small British ensign and a plain blue burgee, the people watched our departure with some sympathy, and a few Irish stevedores gave me a cheer as the schooner gathered way. One well-dressed man on a lean horse eyed us with remarkable interest, scanning our motions through a pocket-telescope. Something in the mien or features of this personage attracted my notice. He was a good-looking large-whiskered man of thirty-five: tall, dark, and with hawk's eyes and an aquiline nose. He wore a white hat, a green coat, and trousers and waistcoat of unbleached linen—a very sensible hot-weather costume, but not American. Indeed, he was quite a shining speck among the creased black suits and crumpled satin vests, the "goatee" beards, and the lean yellow faces, of those around him.

"That man is from the old country," said I to myself, and then steered the schooner a point nearer the wind, and forgot him. Little did I think how our future fates would become involved! The wind was light, and not favourable, and it took many hours to beat across to the Canada shore. My home was at the north-eastern angle of Lake Erie, between the stirring town of Dover and that smaller settlement which has assumed the aspiring name of Niagara. I had the advantage of a creek and a commodious bay on my own property, where twenty Constellations might have lain at anchor, secure from spiteful squalls. There we moored the schooner; my supernumeraries were paid and dismissed; and before three days were out, I had a regular crew. Crew, however, is almost too ambitious a word whereby to designate an old man-of-war's man, half worn out, but still active and resolute, and a stout colonial lad. Such as they were—old Bill and young Eli—they cost me but little in the way of cash, being housed in a sort of wooden barracks where my labourers lived, and drawing regular rations from the store which my foreman superintended.

Harvest was coming on; some large lots of timber had been felled in the woods; and the process of squaring, hauling, and raft-making, demanded the master's eye. So some little time elapsed, during which I was unable to use the yacht, and she lay at anchor, taut and trim, a provoking little beauty coaxing one to a holiday excursion.

The corn being cut, and the pines having been transformed from live spires of darkling green to yellowish logs floating in the smooth water of the creek, I began to feel myself more at liberty to avail myself of my new acquisition. I am of a companionable nature, and should have been glad of a friend or two to cruise with me. But, unluckily, summer is the season for work among the Canadians, who look on their long winter as the time for play, and I could find no

one disengaged. There was but a small detachment of military then quartered in the district, and the solitary subaltern could not venture to give himself leave of absence and abandon his command, even for a day. I should have been obliged to remain on shore, or to put forth alone, but for an acquaintance which I made fortuitously in the public billiard-room at Dover. This was with the tall dark hawk-eyed gentleman whom I had seen for a moment on horseback on the quay of Buffalo, and who was now touring through the western districts of Canada. He was, as I had conjectured, of British birth, and gave his name Mr. Gartmore. But, although of English, or rather Irish, extraction, Mr. Gartmore had been so long in America that he had learned the Yankee habits of grammar and pronunciation, and had roamed about the States from Michigan to Florida. It was after a dinner at the Victoria—then, as now, the chief hotel in Dover—that I gave my new friend an invitation to take a cruise with me in the schooner.

"I'd be very happy, slick away felicitous, now, to accept your hospitality," said Mr. Gartmore, "only the governor-general will be waiting for me at Quebec, you see," here he dropped his voice and looked mysterious; "there are messages to be conveyed from somebody I won't particular, not a thousand miles from Washington, that can't be thrust to the post."

My comrade had the oddest way of mixing Hibernianisms with Pennsylvanian phrases, that I remember, and at another time I might have laughed at the broad hint that he was a secret emissary of the British legation at Washington. But it does not do to be over-critical in a new country; the man was amusing, and I had no reason to regard him with mistrust. I pressed Mr. Gartmore to go with me on a cruise, and, after some little parley, he closed with the invitation. "The Quebec folks," he said (he did not again allude to the Governor-General of the Canadas), "must just keep their impatience cool for a few days. It was but putting high-pressure speed on, when he *did* start, and he should reach the capital in time to make all square."

So, to sea, or rather to lake, we put, in the schooner yacht, well provisioned. It was a pleasant trip we had. The leaves were reddening fast, on millions of beech and maple trees, on sumach and creeping vine; and the scarlet tints of a portion of the forest made a rich contrast with the sombre green of the pine and the light green of the spruce fir. The winds were light and variable, exactly the weather best adapted to display the sailing qualities of the yacht, and the broad grey sheet of water, glimmering like opal at sunset, made a fine framework for the rocky birch-crested islets. Mr. Gartmore proved an agreeable companion. He could sing well, played the key-bugle better than a mail-coach guard, was very skilful at all games from draughts to piquet, and had plenty of anecdotes to tell. Altogether, he pleased me much, and when we landed on the forest-fringed north-

western shore, and had a day's sport in the woods, he handled his rifle with practised adroitness, and killed the only two bucks we could succeed in approaching.

"Upon my word," said I, on one of these occasions, "that is a pretty shot. A hundred and thirty yards, at the lowest calculation, and the buck actually bounding from the covert when you shouldered the piece! You must have had great practice."

My new friend ceased wiping out the barrel of his long rifle, cast his eye on the dead stag lying at his feet, and then looked at me with rather a comical expression on his bronzed face.

"Practice, captain? You may say that. I've known the time when 'twas touch and go with Patrick Gartmore, his life or another's—and all lay on the finger that was steadiest on the trigger, and the eye that drew the truest bead on the enemy."

"The Indians, I suppose?" said I. "Ah! There is wild work on the frontier, I believe?"

—Mr. Gartmore's reply was rather vague.

"Indians! They're some wild cats, that's true for you, the red scaplers, but there are worse savages in America, Captain Pownall, than ever wore paint and eagle's feathers. Why, down south, I've known the day when the bloodhounds—"

He stopped short, bit his lips, and his sunburnt face flushed scarlet.

"Bloodhounds?" said I. "The mention of those brutes puts me in mind of the old Spanish conquerors, and their merciless pursuit of the Caribs. I have heard, but I can hardly believe, that the slave-owners in the south employ such dogs still, in negro catching!"

To my surprise, Mr. Gartmore broke out into a tirade against the whole coloured race, and especially against fugitive slaves and the white abolitionists who helped them. He was so violent on this topic, that we had a long argument; for I was sorry to see a native of our own islands so blinded by prejudices, picked up among the planters of the south. But on this subject Mr. Gartmore would not listen to reason.

"It's too bad, sir, to defend such subversive principles," said he; "forgive my warmth, captain, but you see the question lies in a nutshell. I know niggers; you don't. What air, they, then? Why, animated property, and that's just about all, the ebony-coloured possums! Senator Call never said a sensibler or more philosophical thing than when he galvanised the House with that definition. As for emancipation, sir, it's robbery the most barefaced; and if any one asks Pat Gartmore's opinion, there it is for him."

I laughed, and changed the subject. It was not the first time that I had found persons who were kind and liberal in other matters, hopelessly impracticable on this question. That evening we took advantage of a brisk breeze, and ran over to the American shore, anchoring in front of Munroe. The next morning at an early hour a boat came alongside, and two persons asked leave to come on board. One of

them was a stern-looking man, in plain clothes, but with policeman written on his face as plainly as if D 42 had been embroidered on his collar; the other, was a big bony Kentuckian, with a fierce eye and a lowering brow that indicated anything but good humour.

"Morrow, mister!" growled the Kentuckian, whose homespun clothes and high riding-boots of ill-dressed leather showed many a stain of clay and mud, but yet half-dried; "this gentleman's a States marshal, and I and he hev come on business."

"Indeed?" said I, rather nettled by the fellow's coarse tone; "what may that business be?"

"Let me speak, Mr. Gregg," said the officer of justice, in a dry, but civil manner; "I told you before I came off, that we had no complaint against the gentleman. We only require an answer to one or two questions, which in the name of the law, sir, it is my duty to put."

This puzzled me, but I saw that the last speaker, though firm, had no wish to be offensive, and I therefore professed my willingness to afford any needful information.

"Your name, sir?" said the marshal, pulling out pocket-book and pencil.

"Henry Wadmore Pownall."

"Nationality, and profession?"

"An Englishman, late a captain in her Majesty's service, now a settler in Canada West."

The Kentuckian's features relaxed into a less ferocious expression. The people of his native State have a considerable respect for military men, and the announcement of my social standing seemed to mollify him.

"We needn't trouble the cap; our bird won't be treed here, I guess," he said, as he chucked his cigar, now reduced to a stump, overboard.

"Wait a moment, Mr. Gregg," said the marshal; "sir, I owe you an explanation of this. I am here in execution of my duty to carry out the provisions of the Fugitive Slave Act."

"Of the Fugitive Slave Act?" I exclaimed; "what, in the name of all that's absurd, have I to do with such a law or its provisions?"

"Wall, cap," said the Kentucky man, lighting a fresh cigar, "this is how her head lays. A lot of pesky black varmint have made tracks out of Tennessee, and there's more than four thousand dollars reward to be got by the white gentleman that claps his fist on them. They were run, that's what they war, stampeded and run off by a darned skunk, whom I'll scalp if I set eyes on his ugly face—or may I be mosquitoed out of creation!"

The marshal here interfered, as my patience was evaporating, and briefly informed me: first, that a number of valuable slaves, fourteen in all, had escaped from an estate in Tennessee; secondly, that the Kentuckian was Joshua Gregg, one of the most celebrated of the professional man-hunters whose trade was to pursue runaway negroes; thirdly, that the present search was less for the slaves, who had hitherto been closely concealed, than for the man who had prompted and aided their flight.

"That's the no-torious Dan Holt, the wickedest Irish loafer that ever 'listed in pay of them cheatin' cowards, the Underground Railway Abolition men," Gregg broke in with a vigorous oath; "twice we've met, Dan Holt and I, and twice the snake's got off with a whole skin; but let me on'y get a grip, once more, that's all!"

The marshal observed the disgust with which I heard this ruffian's threats. He was himself calm and resolute, but it was with him a matter of duty, not a labour of love, to hunt down slaves and their abettors. He therefore briefly noted down my residence, the name of the yacht, and the names of my crew, Bill Bradstreet and Eli Cobb, and coaxed his rough ally into the shore boat again. As the boathook was pressed against the vessel's side, to push off, the marshal seemed to remember something.

"Hold on a moment, mister!" cried he to the waterman. "I say, Captain Pownall! I quite forgot to ask—have you any company on board?"

"Only one friend, Mr. Patrick Gartmore, a naturalised American, here by invitation."

"None of them canting Quaker-cut venomous abolitionists?" growled the man-hunter from the stern-sheets.

"By no means," answered I, quite tickled by the comparison of my sporting friend to a Quaker; "Mr. Gartmore holds opinions very much like yours on the subject of slavery. I doubt if he thinks niggers have souls at all, or are more than flesh and blood machines for picking cotton and hoeing rice."

This was conclusive. The negro hunter grinned; the marshal bade the waterman "give way;" and off went my unwelcome visitors shoreward.

"But where is Mr. Gartmore?" I asked in some surprise, as old Bill, who was steward and cook as well as foremast man, bustled by with hot coffee and waffle cakes. Indeed my guest was habitually an early riser. He had never been so slow to appear on deck before. The old sailor said Mr. Gartmore had a bad headache. He had sent me his compliments, and should join me presently if he felt well enough to get up.

"Nothing serious, Bill, I hope? No signs of fever?" I asked in some alarm.

Bill said, "No, not as he knowed on. The gen'lman said perhaps the punch last night had been brewed too strong, but afore noon he'd be as right as a trivet."

"Very well, Bill; when breakfast's over, we'll weigh, and stand out."

The punch; very odd! It had been, to my fancy, a very moderately potent brewage, and I had noticed that my guest's head was a strong and cool one. But the ice, the ice which in that sultry climate turned liquor into nectar, perhaps that made a difference. Well! We weighed and stood out for the eastward. The shore lessened from view, and on deck came Mr. Gartmore, apologising for the late hours he had kept, and looking remarkably well in health.

The coffee, he said, how splendidly my steward made it! had swept the cobwebs out of his brain. His headache was all but gone.

He was very cheerful and chatty, and laughed heartily as I recounted the visit I had received that morning, and as I described the threatening aspect of the formidable Joshua Gregg.

"One of those men, sir, who resemble native gold, rough-hewn from the mine;" said he, eulogistically; "I have read of that energetic citizen, sir, in the New Orleans Picayune and other papers. He is unpolished, but such are Columbia's props."

"Every man to his taste, Gartmore," said I; "for my part, I had rather come down with a crash, were I a country, than rest on such precious pillars as your amiable fellow-citizen."

Gartmore laughed with perfect good nature. He was as blithe as a bird, all day. We were once becalmed, but a friendly breeze came to ruffle the lake, and we ran down to Buffalo, and dropped anchor at moon-rise. We spent the greater part of the next day in rambling about the city, and I afterwards remembered that Gartmore left me deeply engaged in a match at billiards, slipped out, and did not return for more than two hours. In fact, as I left the billiard-room to go on board, he came up and passed his arm through mine.

"I have taken a great liberty, Pownall, my dear boy," said he; "I have ventured to give a sort of half promise to an old friend, that you would give a pleasure-trip to him and his wife along the summer lake. Will you, like a hospitable good fellow?"

"To be sure. Any friend of yours!"

"Ah!" said Gartmore, "there is the individual, just across the street, looking into that dry goods store. He's too short-sighted to make us out, so we'll go over, and I'll introduce you. He's a man of high principles, and his wife is a most accomplished matron." So saying, Gartmore half dragged me to the opposite pavement, where his friend stood, and nudged the latter's elbow.

"Well met, again, Kinder! This is my kind host. Professor Kinder, Captain Pownall. I have been mentioning the whim of your respected lady, Kinder. Poor Mrs. K. is a sad invalid, though a charming person, Pownall."

An odd-looking man the professor! I could not doubt his being short-sighted, for he not only wore spectacles, but blinked like an owl in the daylight. He was short of stature, but a wiry man in make, and appeared to be neither young nor old, with a very palpable wig, a sallow complexion, and high cheek-bones. He wore the regular civilian costume of tail-coat, black satin vest, long cravat, ill-made pantaloons, and dusty varnished boots. And so Mrs. Kinder was an invalid, poor soul? Dear me, my yacht was never intended for sufferers of the fair sex! A party of merry Canadian girls would have been all very well, used as they are to rough it in all manner of holiday expeditions; but I rather shuddered at the idea of a dieaway

American bluestocking on board the Constellation. There was no escape, however. Mrs. Kinder was evidently very much bent on her fancy, and the professor was an indulgent husband. Thus I was trepanned into giving a formal invitation; and next morning we took on board fresh milk, fruit, turkeys, doe venison, and Mr. and Mrs. Kinder.

The day, early as it was, was hot and bright, but Mrs. Kinder wore a great cloak with a hood, closely resembling an Arab burnous, and kept her veil down. As she ascended the yacht's side, not without a good deal of assistance, I could see hardly anything of her but the tip of her nose. In the cabin, however, she took off her wraps. I was surprised to see how very many years she was younger than her husband: although she, too, was short-sighted, and wore spectacles. She was a handsome young woman, in spite of the unbecoming manner in which her glossy hair had been brushed back and hidden away; her complexion was of the rich olive of a Spanish girl; her features were well shaped; and her teeth were wonderfully white and good for those of a town-bred American lady. I helped to get the anchor up, and to shake out the brails of the mainsail, while old Bill bustled with the unusually sumptuous breakfast, and Eli, the lad, took the helm.

"Where to, captain?" asked the boy.

The trip was Mrs. Kinder's bespeak. Common gallantry made me place the yacht at her entire disposal. Her husband whispered to her, and she timidly spoke:

"She should like," she said, "to coast along the south-east shore, and stay awhile, if I pleased, in that delightful bay, Hunter's Cove. She longed to see the scenery there."

She said this in a slow awkward way, like a child repeating a lesson. I saw the professor's eyes twinkle; even his glasses could not hide that. But I had given Mrs. Kinder her choice, and must obey.

"Keep her well in shore," were my orders, "and when you round the point of Hunter's Cove, drop the lightest of the anchors. I know the ground is good, and there's no current."

I cannot say that Mrs. Kinder contributed much to the general amusement. She spoke very little, and in a very low tone, and never sure when addressed. Her health did not appear to me in so bad a state as her husband's anxious fears had prompted him to represent it. But she was singularly shy, and averse to any parade of her accomplishments. When I asked her to favour us with a little instrumental music—there was a piano on board—she gently but decidedly refused. Nor did she seem to care much for the scenery, or for any artistic, literary, or scientific talk. But she was evidently very anxious, quite nervously anxious, to see the Hunter's Cove.

We had to hug the land closely, for the freshening breeze did its best to impel us across to the Canada shores; but the yacht behaved well, and we could manage her fairly enough, on condition of my taking the helm whenever Eli and

Bill were busy in trimming sail, or hauling at tack and sheet. As for Bill, he seemed on this particular day to be ubiquitous: clattering saucepans at one moment, and next moment setting more head-sail on the craft. Mr. Gartmore, too, always obliging, often lent us the aid of his strong arms; so we kept the schooner well in hand, as she bounded like a mettled horse over the steel-grey waves that foamed around.

When we reached the bay which Mrs. Kinder so longed to explore, it was almost dinner-time, and it was agreed upon that we should postpone landing until after our meal. The yacht was moored in the still water, calm and clear as a mill-pond, which the rocky headland fenced from the waves and currents of the broad lake. Bill called Eli to assist him in the critical process of dishing the good things that had been simmering on his stove in the caboose, and we sat down to dinner in the cabin with something of the gaiety which generally attends a pic-nic. Mrs. Kinder seemed in better spirits. She said little, her timidity quite overpowered her conversational abilities, but she laughed now and then at some mirthful remark—a very silvery little laugh she had, and not by any means what one would expect to hear from a Minerva in spectacles.

Hunter's Cove is a very sequestered bay to be so near towns and a well-peopled country, and I have seldom seen a more lonely spot, with its rough woodland and crumbling crags. Only one dwelling was visible: a sort of log-hut, long and low in structure, but tumbling in ruin. I had seen this hovel before, and had been told by a woodcutter that it was built for the accommodation of a lumbering party, many years before. It showed no signs of human habitation; but as the wind waved the tall reeds in a neighbouring creek, I caught a glimpse of something like a large boat, cracked and weather-beaten, yet afloat. Of this, however, I thought very little. The bay might be the resort of fishermen, or others; as for the boat, it had probably been left there as unserviceable. We sat down to dinner, broaching some old hock and champagne in honour of the occasion. The corks popped, and the conversation was gay and agreeable. I had never seen Gartmore in such spirits. Professor Kinder, too, seemed another man—he was so much brighter and better; while his sick wife, saying little, could still laugh and seem pleased. Once or twice it occurred to me that Gartmore's spirits were almost too high to be natural; he was loud, jovial, almost boisterous, but every now and then he would stop short in the flow of talk and mirth, bend forward, and seem to listen. Then, he would be as cheery and noisy as ever. Once or twice I could have sworn that, through their spectacles, Mrs. Kinder's great dark eyes were fixed on me in a half-alarmed, half-mournful manner; but the moment she met my glance, the expression vanished.

"No more wine, thank you," said the lady, as I offered again to fill her glass.

I paused, with the bottle in my hand. "Gartmore," said I, "do you hear that odd splashing sound, like oars or paddles close at hand?"

"Eh? no; I hear nothing," said he, rising from his seat and approaching the cabin-window, as if to look out through the glazed scuttle.

"Ha! you hear *that*, I suppose?" cried I, as a new and more formidable noise succeeded.

This was no other than a trampling of many feet on the deck overhead, a sound of struggling panting and blows, and a smothered outcry of blended voices, in which I thought I recognised the energetic fore-castle oaths of old Bill. Mr. Gartmore did not answer me, but threw himself upon me, with a bound like that of a tiger, and wrapped his arms round me, pressing mine closely down to my sides.

"Are you mad?" cried I, indignantly, struggling hard. We were both strong men, and Gartmore had enough to do to hold me.

"Quick, Kinder, quick!" he said.

Professor Kinder's proceedings were very curious. Deliberately taking off and flinging aside his spectacles, he rose from his chair, picked up a napkin, and very dexterously applied himself to bind my arms together at the wrist. Furious at this incomprehensible perfidy, I made a violent effort, disengaged one hand, and gave Kinder a blow that sent him staggering among the plates and glasses on the sideboard.

The false professor's yellow face grew livid. "I'll make that a dear hit to you, Britisher. If I don't gin ye goss, I'm no man."

He drew a revolving pistol from his breast-pocket, and hurriedly presented it at me. I remember that followed very vaguely indeed. That Gartmore seemed to remonstrate—that Mrs. Kinder sprang forward and thrust herself between me and the deadly weapon, with outstretched arms—I know; but of what was said, nothing remains in my recollection. There was a scuffle, and I am pretty sure that Kinder dealt me several blows on the head with some blunt instrument, and I know that I lay stunned and fainting on the floor, and that the last impression my faculties retained was one of stupid wonder that Mrs. Kinder, whose spectacles had dropped off, and whose long black hair had been shaken in rippling masses over her shoulders, should look so young and pretty as she lifted one slender arm over my prostrate form, and seemed to intercede for my life. Then I swooned away. When I regained my senses I was alone, lying on a sofa in the cabin, stiff and sore, and with dizzy and aching brains. I tried in vain to rise; my limbs could not stir. In vain I tried to call aloud, for a gag was between my teeth, and my voice sounded like the inarticulate murmurs of the dumb. I was fast bound hand and foot, but my head lay on a soft pillow. I could guess that it was a woman's kindness of heart that had occasioned this slight alleviation of my captivity. I could feel that the yacht was in rapid motion, bounding over the waves of the lake, and heeling over to a gale. What was the meaning of the perfidious violence of

which I had been the victim? I could not doubt that some deep-laid plot was at the bottom of the affair, but why had I been singled out for such an attack? Not for revenge; no man, I believed, owed me a grudge, and Gartmore least of all men. Not, surely, for the sake of the few dollars on board? Not for the purpose of gaining possession of the yacht? At sea, pirates might make her useful, but not on a lake, however large. What was that? A gun! Yes, it was the report of a small cannon, and then followed that of another, and a distant dropping fire of musketry succeeded. I wondered for a moment, and then sank into a lethargy again.

The next thing I remember is being in bed in my own chamber, in my own house on the Canadian shore. Mrs. Mackieson, the motherly old Scotchwoman who acted as my housekeeper, and who was a good and kind nurse in illness, was shuffling about the room in list slippers, and there were phials of medicine near, and the room was darkened.

"Ne'er a word will I tell ye, sir, till ye're weel enough to hear it and the doctor gies consent. Sae if ye hae ony curiosity about it, ye maun just take your medicine and gruel, and give up speiring till ye're bonny again. Na, na, ye canna mak auld Effie Mackieson betray her trust, neither by fleecin nor flytin."

The worthy woman was inexorable, and so was the doctor, as to giving me any exciting information until I was fairly convalescent. Once or twice I heard old Bill's grumbling voice without, but he was never permitted to enter. At last, when I was well enough to sit up and take as much beef tea and jelly as my attendants thought good for me, the doctor introduced Bill. The old sailor wanted little pressing to tell all he knew.

"Ye see, captain," said he, "I'm right down ashamed to have been such a greenhorn as to let them landsharks weather on me. But I was down below, and Eli he were on deck, and the stupid young cornstalk never sings out till the boat was alongside, and the niggers a scrambling aboard of us. Then he holloas out, and up I comes, and we played pull devil pull baker for a minit. But bless your soul, sir, I'm an old hulk, hardly seaworthy, and I couldn't make much fight agin eight big he niggers and two whites—"

"Niggers?" said I, eagerly; "do you mean to say they were our assailants?"

"Yes, your honour," said Bill, turning his hat round and round, "the niggers were hid in that log-hut ashore, and had been there for weeks, a lookin' out for means of getting over to Queen Victoria's ground, where in course they're free. For you see, sir, they'd given leg-bail to their masters, out in Tennessee State, helped by some of them 'mancipation chaps.'"

"The niggers were escaped slaves, desperate of getting out of the reach of American law, and Mr. Gartmore and the professor—?"

"If ever I come across them two lubberly land pirates," energetically cried old Bill,

"I'll settle scores with them in a way they won't like. To capture the yacht was bad enough, but to maul your honour so! But here, sir, is a letter the villain bid me hand you, when he got over to the Canada side, and untied Eli and me, after the most of the niggers was in the boats."

The letter was short:

"A thousand excuses, my dear Pownall, for the liberty we have taken with your handsome yacht. Necessity, you know, has no law. Our dark-skinned friends desire me to thank you for helping them out of the clutches of the Columbian eagle, and the whole matter would be mere food for laughter, but for the unlucky blow you were foolhardy enough to strike the professor. That nearly turned the farce into a tragedy, for it was all we could do, to prevent our peppery friend from washing out the affront in blood. We were chased, but the Constellation's heels, quicker than greased lightning, saved our bacon. Should we never meet again, which, alas! is probable, I will give you one parting word of advice in return for your hospitality: Be a little less confiding—what you English call 'green'—another time.

"Gratefully yours,

"P. G."

"And now, my dear sir, allow me to tell you, briefly as may be, the rest of the story," said the doctor; "this Mr. Gartmore, alias Daniel Holt, is about the most famous of the paid agents of the Underground Railway, as they call the active part of the society. He had aided the escape of a number of slaves from Tennessee—eight men, five women, and several children—and, with much trouble, the party was lodged at Hunter's Cove, to await means of transport to Canada and freedom. Besides these, the society had charge of a very beautiful Quadroon girl, Cornelia Rashleigh, from Mobile. Hers was a story you may have often heard in America. It is sufficient to know that she was the petted child of an old planter, who neglected to set her free; that, at his death, she was claimed as property by his heirs; that she was menaced with sale, slavery, and shame; and that her only hope was in flight to our free country. She was, as you have guessed, probably, the fictitious Mrs. Kinder, and to her you probably owe your life; for I understand that the sham professor, whose name is Hiram Leech, is a ferocious ruffian."

The doctor went on to tell me that the fugitive Quadroon girl had been long concealed in Buffalo, in the house of an elderly Quaker lady, who had braved the mob and the law, to shelter the helpless creature. She had been disguised, so as to pass for Kinder's wife, and, on landing at Dover, would be received into a family of zealous abolitionists, who would procure her friends

and employment, at Toronto or Montreal. The plot to secure the yacht had been contrived by my first guest, who had sought my acquaintance for that very end and aim. The negroes, with two whites to aid them, had easily mastered my crew, and Gartmore was quite competent to manage the schooner in the run for Canada. But, in some manner, the doctor added, the scheme had leaked out. A sloop, with two carronades, and a number of armed men on board, headed by Joshua Hudson, and backed by a marshal and a warrant, had arrived at Hunter's Cove, in time to give chase to the schooner, and to riddle her mainsail with shot. Luckily, no one was hurt, and the yacht far outstripped her pursuers, landing her human freight in safety.

"The conduct of Holt and Leech is indefensible," said the doctor, "but what can you expect? The society must work with such tools as can be got; the work to be done is desperate; and these paid agents, who care for nothing but profit, are not overburdened with scruples. To do Holt justice, I have heard that he was sincerely sorry that you should have sustained bodily hurt."

"I am very much obliged to him," said I.

A few days later, a Yankee speculator from Buffalo paid me a visit.

"Mister," said he, "I've come to trade with you for the schooner. She ain't no manner of use to you no more, she ain't."

"How so?" I asked, rather tartly.

"Captain," said the man, "the boys won't believe that rigmarole about a forcible seizure. They swear it was a planned thing, out of jealousy of our glorious institutions. And when the sloop come back, beat, from the pursuit, you never heerd such a row as there war in Buffalo. The people burned you in effigy, they did—meanin' no offence—and swore great guns they'd do it in real, next time you showed yourself, after jaunting off them darkies. As for the yacht, they'll burn her, they will. Now, cap., be advised. Yacht work won't be no fun, now you can't land on our shores—and you can't, sure as coons climb! So just trade her to me, and I'll send her on by the canal, and swop her to Brooklyn."

I was sick of my bargain, and tired of aquatics, as the Yankee probably guessed. He bought the famous yacht Constellation for about a hundred dollars, and there the matter ended.

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